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ABSTRACT

This book contains the statements made by heads of state or government, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and the executive director of UNICEF during proceedings at the World Summit for Children in New York in September, 1990. Among the 159 delegations participating, 71 were led by heads of state or government. Deliberations focused on the survival, protection, and development of children, and the implementation of the recommendations of the summit. The sections of the book are arranged according to these four main topics. Each section includes statements, introductory remarks, and commentaries by heads of state or government relevant to the topic of the section. The draft Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children is included. This declaration was read to the summit participants by six children. Appended materials include the report by the prime minister of Canada, who was co-president of the summit; a statement by the president of the United Nations General Assembly; and an index of participating countries. (BC)

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STATEMENTS

BY HEADS OF STATE OR GOVERNMENT

at the World Summit for Children

UNITED NATIONS

29–30 September 1990

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STATEMENTS

BY HEADS OF STATE OR GOVERNMENT

at the
World Summit for Children

UNITED NATIONS
29-30 September 1990

unicef
United Nations Children's Fund

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Room H-12G
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December 1990

Foreword

This book contains the statements made by Heads of State or Government, the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Executive Director of UNICEF during official proceedings at the World Summit for Children on 29 and 30 September 1990 in New York, and the statement by the President of the General Assembly in formally receiving the Summit Declaration on 1 October 1990.

Among the 159 delegations participating in the proceedings, 71 were led by Heads of State or Government, forming the largest gathering of world leaders in history. Eighty-eight additional countries were also represented, most at ministerial level.

Deliberations focused on four main areas: the survival, protection and development of children and implementation of the conclusions of the Summit. The statements in this book are arranged according to those four main topics, in the order in which they were delivered.

The conclusions of the Summit include great promises to the children of the world, recorded in the Declaration adopted and signed at the final session. For example, an extraordinary new commitment was made to try to end child deaths and child malnutrition on today's scale by the year 2000, and to provide for the normal physical and mental development of all the world's children. Accompanying the Declaration is a detailed Plan of Action to help guide implementation by all sectors of society in all countries.

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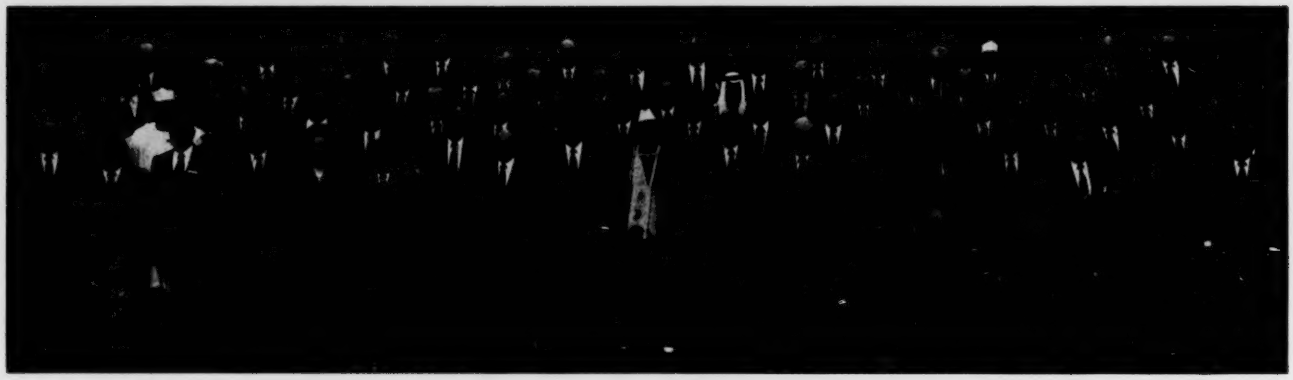
Heads of State or Government Attending the World Summit for Children, United Nations, 29-30 September 1990



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Heads of State or Government as they appear in the photograph, from left to right, from back (Row 4) to front (Row 1):

Row 4: Chairman Alia of Albania • President Menem of Argentina • President Ershad of Bangladesh • Prime Minister Sandiford of Barbados • King Baudouin of Belgium • President Collor of Brazil • President Zhelev of Bulgaria • Chairman Dementei of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic • President Kolingba of the Central African Republic • President Aylwin of Chile • President Gaviria of Colombia • President Calderón of Costa Rica • President Havel of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic • Prime Minister Schlüter of Denmark • Prime Minister Hamadou of Djibouti • Prime Minister Charles of Dominica • President Cristiani of El Salvador • Prime Minister Holkeri of Finland.

Row 3: President Jawara of Gambia • President von Weizsäcker of the Federal Republic of Germany • President Vieira of Guinea-Bissau • Secretary of State Casaroli of the Holy See • President Callejas Romero of Honduras • Prime Minister Hermannsson of Iceland • Prime Minister Haughey of Ireland • Prime Minister Andreotti of Italy • Prime Minister Kaifu of Japan • Sheikh Al-Sabah of Kuwait • Prime Minister El-Hoss of Lebanon • Prime Minister Brunhart of Liechtenstein • Grand Duke Jean of Luxembourg • President Gayoom of Maldives • Minister of State Ausseil of Monaco • President Chissano of Mozambique • President Nujoma of Namibia.

Row 2: President Barrios de Chamorro of Nicaragua • Vice President Aikhomu of Nigeria • Prime Minister Syse of Norway • President Endara Galimany of Panama • Prime Minister Namaliu of Papua New Guinea • Prime Minister Hurtado Miller of Peru • Prime Minister Mazowiecki of Poland • President Iliescu of Romania • President Habyarimana of Rwanda • Prime Minister Simmonds of St. Kitts and Nevis • Prime Minister Compton of St. Lucia • Prime Minister Alesana of Samoa • President Diouf of Senegal • President Momoh of Sierra Leone • Prime Minister González of Spain • President El Bashir of the Sudan • President Shankar of Suriname • Prime Minister Dlamini of Swaziland.

Row 1: Prime Minister Karoui of Tunisia • President Özal of Turkey • President Museveni of Uganda • Chairman Masol of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic • Prime Minister Thatcher of the United Kingdom • President Mwinyi of the United Republic of Tanzania • President Bush of the United States • President Salinas de Gortari of Mexico (Initiating Country) • Prime Minister Mulroney of Canada (Initiating Country) • President Traoré of Mali (Initiating Country) • Prime Minister Carlsson of Sweden (Initiating Country) • Secretary-General Pérez de Cuéllar of the United Nations • President Lacalle of Uruguay • Prime Minister Lini of Vanuatu • President Pérez of Venezuela • President Jović of Yugoslavia • Prime Minister Bululu of Zaire • President Mugabe of Zimbabwe. Prime Minister Rocard of France also participated in the Summit.

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WELCOME / INTRODUCTORY TOASTS AND MESSAGES

Toast by the Prime Minister of SWEDEN, His Excellency Mr. Ingvar Carlsson,

at the Dinner for Heads of State or Government Participating in the World Summit for Children, New York, September 29, 1990

Mr. Secretary-General,

Dear Dignitaries,

The gathering here tonight of all of us, Heads of State and numerous colleagues, is a unique event.

It is a sign of a new era.

It is also the start of a new commitment.

Reality changes fast. Major changes in the political climate have brought us to a new period in world politics. It has led to progress in many fields. It has also made this gathering possible.

On behalf of the six initiators, I wish to welcome you all, on the eve of the first-ever World Summit for Children.

It is an honour to greet you all, from every part of our planet. We meet in our common forum, to share experiences and concerns, to exchange ideas and visions about our common lives.

The children of the world are not just another generation. They are the future—the future of all of us.

How children live, how children grow up, how children are—this will decide the whole shape of human civilization.

The way we respect the right of the child is, in a way, how we determine our own future.

And that is what this Summit is all about.

It marks a commitment from all of us to do more—for the survival of children, for their protection, and for their development.

It marks a commitment to work in our countries—but also to work together.

This Summit is an outstanding event—but it is no solitaire. It is part of a process, in which we all have important roles to play.

My colleagues and I in the group of initiators have been extremely encouraged by the response to our invitation.

We thank you for coming—but above all, we thank you for what it means.

It means a personal commitment, at the highest political level, for a better future for every child in this world.

I propose a toast to the success of the World Summit for Children.

Address by His Majesty the King of the BELGIANS at the Dinner for Heads of State or Government Participating in the World Summit for Children, New York, September 29, 1990

Ladies and gentlemen,

We have been brought together here by the children of all nations. We are gathered to confront the task of preparing a better future for them. I am extremely grateful to the Heads of State and Government who took the initiative to convene this meeting, and also to UNICEF.

For far too long in the history of mankind, the child has been seen as an object of private property, as an instrument of power, often for exploitation, or as a source of purely personal happiness.

As the twentieth century draws to a close, we must see the child as a subject in his or her own right and with his or her own legal rights. It is in this context that the Convention on the Rights of the Child represents real progress in the sphere of legal rights. It constitutes an important step forward in the history of childhood and hence in our human development. We recognize that the child needs specific protection. This was enunciated thirty years ago in the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child. "The child by reason of his physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care, including appropriate legal protection, before as well as after birth".

Yet despite all the efforts that have been made in the legal sphere, we know only too well that today many children are suffering, be they victims of man's cruelty, or of unjust economic and social conditions.

In the face of this major problem, I hope that this Summit will be able to come forward with at least four clear lines of action.

First of all, we must demonstrate the genuine intention of all our countries to ratify, as soon as possible, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, bearing in mind the legislative processes of individual countries. Furthermore, we must ensure that, after ratification, it is put into practical operation without delay.

However, it is evident that legal rights alone cannot lead to the attainment of the ideal sought by the Convention.

Governments, working hand in hand with political groupings, religious, lay and cultural bodies and, above all, non-governmental organizations, must do all that is in their power to make public opinion—and by that I mean every individual citizen—aware of the spirit and the contents of the Convention. They must identify the desired changes and improvements in the plight of children and take steps to implement these changes. It is only with the support and practical backing of a population which is squarely behind it that governmental action has a chance of succeeding in an area affecting so intimately human beings, above all the most vulnerable, i.e., the children.

I come to our third line of action. We must insist on the essential role of the family in policies pertaining to children. The signatories of the Convention understood this well when they stated they are "convinced that the family, as the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members and particularly children, should be afforded the necessary protection and assistance so that it can fully assume its responsibilities within the community".

Many of the deficiencies and illnesses from which children suffer, much of the behaviour which leads to their being rejected by society, have their origins in the breakdown of the family. The family must, I believe, be the centre of a child's existence where he or she is cared for, understood, listened to and given unstinting support. Such a family is a source of strength for society as a whole. It is not inward looking. On the contrary, it enables its members to be more outward looking, to help others, particularly those less fortunate than themselves.

As the humanitarian and development non-governmental organizations have stressed, this objective must be pursued by "strengthening the role of the family and its capacity to care for children, developing family life education, and promoting and supporting the goals of the forthcoming International Year of the Family", planned for 1994.

Finally, in the elaboration of specific programmes very great attention must be paid to children in especially difficult circumstances, notably children deprived of family care, abandoned and street children, those with a handicap, those who are victims of abuse, be it physical, mental or sexual, those who are victims of commercial or industrial exploitation, and those deprived of their liberty and children in situations of extreme poverty.

We cannot allow ourselves to become resigned to the fact that 40,000 children die every day of hunger and malnutrition, of disease, from lack of drinking water and medical care, or from the effects of drugs. It is a fundamentally immoral and unjust situation, and we must do all in our power to ensure that it is not allowed to continue.

Finally, there are children—and alas we observe this today—who are drawn into armed conflicts or who become refugees.

In this context, I wish to conclude by making an urgent appeal to all those Heads of State and Government concerned to resolve the present conflict in the Gulf region peacefully and in accordance with international law. And therefore the resolutions of the United Nations must all be applied without exception.

If this path is not followed, if war breaks out, there will also be hundreds of thousands of children among the first innocent victims. Let us not forget this, let us not forget them.

Reply by the President of the REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA, His Excellency Mr. Sam Nujoma,

at the Dinner for Heads of State or Government
Participating in the World Summit for Children,
New York, September 29, 1990

Mr. Secretary-General,

Your Excellencies,

Dear friends,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a source of great satisfaction and honour to me to respond to a toast just proposed by the honourable Prime Minister of Sweden, Mr. Ingvar Carlsson.

I cannot agree more that one of the greatest joys in life is the birth of a child. That's why our gathering here this night as world leaders from all parts of our planet signifies the beginning and a resolve to start a new commitment towards the plight of children all over the world.

Many children, especially in developing countries, face multiple problems of gross inequalities, such as access to primary health care, basic education, adequate shelter, safe drinking water and proper sanitation.

This World Summit for Children must emulate our commitment and dedication to the survival and protection of our children.

It is our collective responsibility as world leaders to make planet Earth a happy and safe place for children to grow up freed from misery.

I would like to thank the initiators of this most important World Summit for Children, for their imagination.

The fact that so many of us have responded to the invitation is a testimony that we all recognize that the children are the cream of the world and the hope for the future.

Let us move forward and make the world a better place for our children to live in. It is possible! It can be done!

Thank you.

Statement by the Foreign Minister of PAKISTAN, His Excellency Sahabzada Yaqub-Khan,

at the Dinner for Heads of State or Government Participating in the World Summit for Children, New York, September 29, 1990

Excellencies, Heads of State and Government,

I am deeply conscious of the honour I have of addressing this distinguished gathering of world leaders on the eve of the World Summit for Children—an event of truly historic magnitude.

I feel privileged to bring to Your Excellencies the greetings and salutations of the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mr. Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi. He was most anxious to personally participate in the Summit and was looking forward to exchanging views with his peers on a subject of such fundamental and universal relevance as the survival, protection and development of our children. He has asked me to convey to Your Excellencies his profound regrets at his inability to be present here tonight. His preoccupation with the grave and momentous events in our region has compelled him to forgo the opportunity of making a personal contribution to the Summit.

Allow me, Your Excellencies, to convey to you the good wishes of President Ghulam Ishaq Khan and Prime Minister Jatoi for the success of the World Summit, and their sincere belief that your deliberations would foster a better future for the children of our world.

As an initiating country, Pakistan has made its modest contribution to the organization of this Summit and to the elaboration of the Declaration and the Plan of Action to be adopted tomorrow.

Let me assure Your Excellencies, on behalf of our Prime Minister, that the commitment which moved us to initiate this idea would continue to motivate the Government of Pakistan in ensuring the implementation of these historic documents both in letter and in spirit.

Thank you, Your Excellencies.

OPENING SESSION

Opening of the World Summit for Children by the President of the REPUBLIC OF MALI, His Excellency General Moussa Traoré,

Co-President of the World Summit for Children

(interpretation from French)

I declare open the World Summit for Children.

On this historic occasion devoted to children, it is an honour for me to share the podium with the Prime Minister of Canada, His Excellency Mr. Brian Mulroney. On behalf of the six initiating countries—Canada, Egypt, Mexico, Pakistan, Sweden and my own country, Mali—I wish to extend a warm welcome to all the participants in this Summit for Children.

On behalf of all of you, we express our thanks to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, His Excellency Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, for agreeing to convene this Summit on our behalf and for offering the facilities of the United Nations Headquarters for that purpose. We also express our appreciation to UNICEF, the United Nations Children's Fund, which, under the stewardship of Mr. James P. Grant, has been the driving force behind this unprecedented event. Indeed, never before have so many Heads of State or Government gathered around the same table, and children are the reason for this historic event.

Above all, I extend a special welcome today to the children whose clear young voices charmed us a few moments ago. Their presence in this stately Hall of the United Nations General Assembly adds a refreshing note. Above all, it is a reminder of our obligations, as leaders of our fragile planet, to build peace and safeguard the future by ensuring the survival, the protection and the development of children.

Your Excellencies, ladies, gentlemen and dear children, before calling on the Secretary-General of the United Nations, I would urge you to respect the self-imposed discipline that is required for the success of this Summit.

Address by the Secretary-General of the UNITED NATIONS, Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar

This is a most moving occasion. Leaders from every corner of the world are gathered here to address a unifying human concern—the concern for the survival and welfare of children. In doing so, they strikingly demonstrate humanity's loyalty to itself.

This World Summit represents a commitment at the highest level to build a world order that will guard what is the most precious resource of the human race, its children. Such a world means a world that is not ravaged by violent conflict, disfigured by poverty, plagued by crime and scarred by repression.

It is with these thoughts in mind that I extend to the distinguished Heads of State and Government attending this Summit the warmest welcome on behalf of the United Nations family. I should also like to congratulate and thank the six initiating Governments for their vision in calling this meeting, and the United Nations Children's Fund for its tireless efforts in defending and promoting the cause of children.

As we look at the world's social and economic landscape, we marvel at the extraordinary advances that have been made in civilization as a whole. Yet with all this, we also see that children continue to be the most vulnerable segment of society. Two sets of anxieties cry to be addressed. One arises from the global social crisis, which robs children of the emotional shelter and the moral sustenance that they need. The other cause of distress is the poverty that stalks the larger part of the world and that denies children the enjoyment of their rights. To this are added the effects of conflict, internal or external. One in two among the 8 million refugees in the world today is a child.

There is no way we can reconcile humanity's remarkable progress with the continuance of the misery that counts children among its victims. The one element of reassurance is our awareness that what the survival and welfare of children demands from us is systematic action that goes to the root of the problems involved.

Through a sustained effort over the years, the United Nations has sought to give focus and structure to this awareness. From the establishment of the United Nations Children's Fund in 1946 to the adoption last year of the Convention on the Rights of the Child—the first legal instrument to define and lend content to children's rightful status in society—it has been engaged in defining the goals and strategies for ensuring the protection and well-being of children. It has set out the issues that critically affect children. Let this Summit be the high point of the campaign to strengthen international co-operation in addressing those issues.

Poverty, I repeat, is the main enemy of children. Hunger, disease, illiteracy, despair: these constitute the enemy's fearful train. There is no way in which issues relating to children can be segregated from the issues of the overall social and economic environment.

We now have a unique opportunity to establish a world order which encompasses not only the maintenance of peace and security but also the better management of the world's economic and social affairs. With the ideological gulf bridged, the removal of the disparity between the North and the South demands a high-level dialogue. Such a dialogue should aim at a global consensus. The moving concern which has occasioned this Summit must now guide the international community in that endeavour.

Children personify the world's future. In ensuring their welfare, we transcend all divisions of the present. We participate in the shaping of human destiny. This unique occasion should serve as an inspiration to that end.

Opening Statement by the Prime Minister of CANADA, His Excellency The Rt. Hon. Brian Mulroney,

Co-President of the World Summit for Children

I would like to begin by speaking directly to the children who are here today. In a real way, you represent all of the children of the world. And so this is your Summit. You are here to represent the hopes and expectations and the aspirations and needs of your generation. It is your generation that will eventually judge how well we have understood your own special problems. And it is you who will hold us to account for our efforts to resolve them.

Our job here today is to ensure that when the children assume positions of leadership in their own nations, and around the world, they will not face the same problems of poverty and suffering that prevail in so many countries, bringing us all so much tragedy and loss.

The fact is, as UNICEF and the World Health Organization have explained persuasively, both here and around the world, many of the problems that children face can be solved, readily and at a very modest cost. Children need not die for lack of immunization or clean water or adequate food. Children need not grow up illiterate, neglected and abused. These are ills that can be remedied.

There can be no doubt that this Summit highlights the gap between the hopes we have for our children and the conditions in which many children find themselves, through no fault of their own. Despite the welcome successes of UNICEF and other international agencies, much more needs to be done.

Resources always seem to be scarce. By way of illustration, the "peace dividend" that many expected from the end of the cold war has already been diluted very seriously by aggression in the Persian Gulf. Once again, the neediest children have lost—in large measure, because so few voices among the powerful have spoken out strongly on their behalf.

Today may represent the beginning of a change in the lives of the world's children. Today, in this Hall, the children may finally have found the voices and the friends they have long been seeking.

With all the demands on Governments to fund worthwhile activities, there will never be enough money to do everything. Priorities will have to be established, and difficult choices made. Funding is important. But it is not, in the end, the decisive factor in the war on children's suffering; the decisive factor is political will.

Mr. Secretary-General: The endorsement today of the Declaration—with its principles and precepts—and the Plan of Action will, in the judgement of Canada, be an indispensable step in marshalling political will and transforming the lives of our children. Colleagues, I commend the Declaration and the Plan of Action to all of you. And to the children who are here today—and to those who are listening—I say I invite you to listen carefully to what we say and, in the coming years, to hold us to our commitments. I hope that none of us will be found wanting.

Statement by the President of MEXICO, His Excellency Lic. Carlos Salinas de Gortari

(interpretation from Spanish)

Mr. Secretary-General, Co-Presidents, Heads of State and Government, children of the world: today we are focusing the attention of States on the need to give priority to our children, to whom we must hand over a more humane world, infused with sensitivity. This is perhaps the first world summit of the new age. We are calling here for new times.

I come to this meeting at a time when the world is immersed in profound and continuous change. The future is still uncertain. Today, the international agenda is full of new dilemmas, as well as new hopes, though it has not completely left behind other problems, long-standing and difficult, of mankind. It is my country's conviction that no challenge is as great, or will have such devastating future effects, as the problems faced by the world's children. Of us all, children are those most affected. These topics merit a new international awareness. Above all, they demand a commitment to action. This is the starting-point.

The end of the cold war has altered our way of viewing the world. Events once considered impossible are now taking place one after the other, and mankind's capacity for amazement has been renewed. Concern about the virulence of regional conflicts is also growing. For children, death, abandonment, separation from their families, refuge in foreign and inhospitable lands and hunger are the tragic consequences of local crises, though the possibility of total war is growing more distant. We therefore devoutly hope that the outcome of détente will be resources devoted to peace.

In Mexico, more than 40 per cent of the population are under 14 years old. We are a country of young people, who are especially sensitive to the vulnerability of children. That is why we are particularly concerned about the need for international solidarity in dealing with the grave problems of children, both in our own country and throughout the world. The threat to family unity affects not only the developing countries, but is also frequently present in the fringes of even the richest cities. Poverty is the absence of equity and the weakening of solidarity.

I should like to call your attention to the plight of migrant children, child refugees and the illegal traffic in minors. Seeing brave and courageous men and women emigrate has not been the least painful consequence of the economic crisis. Often those who make the decision to emigrate have to face the violation of their human rights and the break-up of their family life. The main victims are the children. In areas where emigration is widespread, children sometimes spend their whole lives waiting for the return of an absent father or mother. Nations without sound family units are divided societies.

For many years, along its southern border, my country has experienced the presence of child refugees from Central America. With the support of UNICEF, and in accordance with our law, these children have met with assistance, understanding and respect in our country. We should defend the principle of the family unit to the utmost. Consequently, it is also important for the world community to put an end to the illegal international traffic in minors. We need to act promptly to establish rules for co-operation in eradicating this cruellest commerce of all.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child is the basic document which answers these needs. Its strict enforcement by the States will be our most significant legacy to the generations living at the end of this century and the beginning of the next. We must not allow this valuable instrument to be set aside owing to a lack of political will on the part of nations or insufficient support by society and its organizations. If each nation elaborates a detailed plan of action geared to the specific circumstances of its own children, and along with UNICEF periodically evaluates its results, then the world will have found in this meeting the means to turn words into deeds.

Few things are so valuable as the first effort of life and the soul. Childhood is the valiant heart of hope and fantasy. The deaths of nearly 40,000 children in the world every day seem to arouse indignation only because of the general indifference with which they are met. We must reverse this situation through our deeds, turning our presence here today into a political affirmation and a commitment to take action and mobilize society to that end.

Let us turn our concern over war, debt or stagnation into an obsession with peace, growth and justice. We no longer want to witness images of children with eyes that are devoid of hope, eternally questioning, enveloped in sadness. These children, the essence of life, bear within them a premature death. Their eyes convey with unparalleled eloquence the failure of development schemes among the nations of the world. Let us work together with energy and determination to put a new look on the faces of the world's children. That is the true crusade for the new millennium.

Statement by the First Lady, Mrs. Suzanne Mubarak, on behalf of the President of the ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT, His Excellency Mr. Mohamed Hosni Mubarak

(interpretation from Arabic)

Mr. President, Heads of State and Government, it gives me great pleasure to convey to you warm greetings from the people of Egypt and their leadership, a people whose ancestors realized, thousands of years ago, that children were the mainstay of the future.

Against this historical background and having recognized the importance of childhood issues and their related problems, Egypt joined in calling for the convening of the World Summit for Children last year. President Mubarak would have headed the Egyptian delegation to this Summit, had it not been for the current circumstances in the Middle East.

I avail myself of this unique opportunity to stress that we consider that all matters relevant to child development are a part of the comprehensive development process, and a logical approach towards a human development that considers the human being as the main object and not merely a tool of development.

Hence it was necessary that childhood and its problems should acquire top priority in national as well as international action. The significance of this Summit is that it has included child issues in the international agenda at summit level. This marks the birth of a common vision and a common philosophy which will be at the heart of international planning for the future of our children and of ways to address their problems.

I should like from this rostrum to say a few words of the Egyptian child, a typical example of the children of the third world. I should like to highlight the fact that Egypt has already embarked on realizing the goals of this Summit in the following manner.

First, the President of Egypt has declared the period 1989-1999 a decade of the Egyptian child. The aim is to provide all-embracing child care and bring up our younger generation in a healthy, both environmental and psychological, milieu. We have already begun to reap the first fruits of such efforts in Egypt's urban and rural communities.

Secondly, the National Council for Motherhood and Childhood was established in 1988 with a view to formulating a permanent and consistent policy for children.

Thirdly, Egypt has contributed to child welfare at the international level. It has contributed effectively and significantly to the process of drafting the International Convention on the Rights of the Child. It was among the first countries to ratify that Convention immediately after its adoption.

You may agree, Mr. Chairman, that all these efforts, notwithstanding Egypt's increasing economic difficulties, reflect Egypt's political will to accord a high priority to the issues of childhood in its national development planning.

Ladies and gentlemen, from Egypt, the gateway to Africa and the heart of the Middle East, from a region where innocent children are faced with the heavy legacy of the past, and the uncertainties of the arduous present, I should like to express the hope that we will continue to work together, strongly united in our determination to dry the tears of our children and put a smile on the faces of our future generations.

Statement by the President of the UNITED STATES, His Excellency Mr. George Bush,
the Head of State of the Host Country

Mr. Secretary-General, President Traoré, Prime Minister Mulroney and my distinguished colleagues from around the world, thank you all, and welcome to the United States. I am proud to address you here today as the President of this country in which this special Summit is being held.

At the outset, let me join all in expressing our appreciation to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and then to the kids here with us today.

President Traoré, our thanks to you, Sir, and may I extend my special respects and special thanks to the Prime Minister of Canada. It was largely his foresight and persistence that resulted in this impressive turnout.

In recent days the world community has acted decisively in defence of a principle, that small States shall not become souvenirs of conquest. It was just three weeks ago that I spoke to the American people about a new world order, a new partnership of nations, freer from the threat of terror, stronger in the pursuit of justice, more secure in the quest for peace.

Today we are holding this unprecedented World Summit to work for the well-being of those who will live in and lead this new world. Their voices are still faint and unheard, so we have come together, more than 70 strong, Chiefs of State, and Heads of Government, to speak for the children of the Earth.

But first we should acknowledge that for many children the only blessing they will ever know is their innocence. The facts are as stark as they are oppressive. There are almost 3 billion young people on Earth today, and more than 14 million of them will die this year. In the next hour alone a thousand babies will perish.

But I think we are all gathered here to defy these statistics. We have seen children—swollen bellies; we have seen the pleading eyes of starvation. We have heard the cries of children dying of disease. So let us affirm at this historic Summit that these children can be saved. They can be saved when we live up to our responsibilities, not just as an assembly of Governments but as a world community of adults, of parents.

In my time as President I have heard the heart-rending cries of AIDS babies. I have stood helpless over infants born addicted to cocaine, their tiny bodies trembling with pain. But I have also been to many classrooms across America where the influence of love and well-being can be seen instantly in bright faces and wondering eyes.

From all these experiences, and many more, I have learned that our children are a mirror, an honest reflection of their parents and their world. Sometimes the reflection is flattering, and at other times we simply do not like what we see; but we must never turn away.

Let me tell you what the American people intend to do. This month our Secretary of Health and Human Services, Dr. Sullivan, announced ambitious new health objectives that we as a nation—citizens, family, business and government—hope to reach by the year 2000. We seek to reduce infant mortality and low-weight births, to increase child-immunization levels and improve the health of both mothers and children. And we want to see the day when every American child is part of a strong and stable family. We are working in partnership with other Governments and international organizations to eliminate child-killing diseases. Of course, many diseases are but a manifestation of an even more basic disorder—malnutrition—and to combat world starvation the United States will continue to help food production in many countries. It will send almost 150 million metric tons of food abroad this year.

Sadly, there is another child killer loose in the world that knows no cure, AIDS, and nowhere is this killer taking more lives than in Africa. So I have asked Dr. Sullivan and Dr. Ronald Roskens, Administrator of the Agency for International Development (AID), to go to Africa to see what else America and the world can do to advance child survival across that continent and across the world.

So far I have spoken here just briefly of the most urgent issues of survival. But simple survival is not enough for a child lacking in health or learning or denied the love of family and time for play. One year and two days ago I met with the governors of our 50 states on a single topic of national importance. We agreed to set ambitious education goals for the year 2000. For America this is a stiff challenge, self-imposed, and I see among us today many leaders who should take pride in giving the world examples of educational excellence, examples the next generation of Americans will not leave unchallenged.

But of course education is a mystery to the 100 million children not in school. It is an outrage that so many spend their childhood in mines, in factories and in the twilight world of the streets. The United States outlawed most forms of child labour decades ago. Let us strive together to make education the primary work of all children.

All children must be given the chance to lead happy, healthy and productive lives. Let me be the first to say that the United States can learn from many of the nations represented here today.

But what my countrymen have learned from hard experience is that progress begins when we empower people, not bureaucracies. Programmes can best enhance the welfare of children by strengthening the mutual responsibilities of public institutions and individual families. We should also look to the private sector as an essential partner. Public efforts on behalf of children should encourage experimentation among neighbourhoods and local governments, not stifle it. When it comes to improving the welfare of children, empowerment should begin first with their parents, as President Salinas de Gortari so eloquently stated a minute ago.

Saving one child is a miracle. As world leaders we can realize such miracles, and then we can count them in millions.

My friends and colleagues, thank you very much, and may God bless the children of the world.

Script of a Video Presentation on the Situation of Children in the World, Especially Produced for the Summit by UNICEF

We were all children once.

But some children never grow up to their potential.

And some never grow up at all. Every day in our world, 40,000 children die. Each death, the death of a child ... who had a personality ... and a potential. A family ... and a future.

40,000 a day ... A quarter of a million a week. A child every two seconds ...

And behind every child who dies ... ten more live on with malnutrition ... unable to grow normally ... in body or in mind ...

By any measure ... this is the greatest tragedy of our times.

But because it happens every day ... it simply isn't news.

But if we *could* see inside the millions of ordinary homes where this daily disaster happens ...

If we could sit for a while with the parents ...

We would see then that more than half of today's child deaths ... and half of today's child malnutrition ... are caused by the sheer frequency of a few common illnesses ...

Five specific illnesses ...

diarrhoeal dehydration ...

measles ...

whooping cough ...

tetanus ...

pneumonia ...

These five ... half of all child deaths.

No earthquake, no famine, no flood, ever killed 40,000 children in a single day. Yet this is the toll taken by malnutrition and disease every day. And though these children of the quiet catastrophe never make the headlines ... they are just as dead ... and the love and the hopes of their families ... are just as surely turned to grief.

And parents grieve not only for the dead ... but for the millions of the malnourished.

This is not the visible malnutrition of famine. It's subtler by far. But it afflicts a quarter of our world's young children ... and saps the development of people and of nations.

The voice of the past says that this has always happened. That it's inevitable. But in the 1990s, that's simply no longer true. Today's knowledge holds out the chance, for the first time in history, of protecting the lives and the normal growth of all the world's children ... and the breakthroughs are quite specific.

New vaccines and a new commitment ... have immunized three-quarters of the poor world's children. This year alone ... the immunization effort will save two and a half million young lives ... and prevent over a quarter of a million from being crippled by polio.

But 8,000 children are still dying every day from diseases which vaccines can prevent ... and 500 are still crippled every day by polio.

The biggest killer of all ... dehydration. It can now be prevented by low-cost oral rehydration therapy. In the last five years, this simple technique has been taught to one family in three in the developing world ... And it's saving over a million lives a year ... But it could save more than twice as many—if only it were used by every country ... and by every family.

It's also now known that longer intervals between births could reduce by as much as one third the heavy toll of deaths ... among mothers as well as children ... And with new knowledge ... especially about growth monitoring, breastfeeding, weaning, and preventing and coping with illness ... even the age-old problem of malnutrition could now be solved ... The annual cost ... less than $10 per child.

... The simple ... the obvious ... the affordable ... can now reduce ... the toll of frequent illness, poor growth, and early death.

Specifically, today's knowledge could defeat the top five causes of child death and child malnutrition in virtually every developing country. The total cost might be an extra two-and-a-half billion dollars a year ... Less than the world now spends on the military ... every single day.

But today's knowledge can do more than reduce the quantity of death—it can improve the quality of life. It can bring ... adequate food ... clean water ... and primary health care.

And even in some of the world's poorest countries ... education has been provided for all at an affordable cost. In particular, the education of girls is probably the world's best investment. For improving the lives and the health of children ... For reducing birth rates ... And for ending the wasteful and shameful discrimination against girls and women in almost every country.

Last year, there was even a breakthrough against the abuse of children in all its forms ... Like many such documents in history, the Convention begins life as just a piece of paper ... but a paper which will one day become the standard below which any civilized nation, rich or poor, will be ashamed to fall.

A standard at work ... a standard at war ... in our streets ... and in our homes ...

But the Convention is also concerned about the children of the industrialized world ... where one child in ten lives with poverty and hunger in the midst of plenty ... where one child in six suffers the breakdown of the family ... where unknown numbers suffer mental or physical abuse ... and millions live with loveless affluence ...

Many are the problems ... many the causes ... but the greatest threat to our world's children remains ordinary, everyday poverty ...

Poverty which will not be overcome without ... a solution to debt ... a renewal of investment ... an increase in aid ... and the kind of economic growth in which the poor have a share. But as part of that struggle ... the children of the world ... have a right to ask that we do what can now be done to protect them through the vulnerable years. They have a right to ask, simply because they are children, for a "first call" on our concern.

Today ... whether a child ... survives or not ... is well nourished or not ... is immunized or not ... has a school to go to or not ... should not depend ... on whether interest rates rise or fall ... on whether commodity prices go up or down ... on whether the economy is growing or in recession ... or on whether any one political party is in power.

Children only have one chance to grow normally in mind and body ... That one chance should be given a clear priority—and children should be able to depend on that commitment ... in good times and in bad.

Basic protection for all the world's children ... is no longer a question of possibility ... It's a question of political priority.

To put today's known solutions into action on the necessary scale depends on sustained leadership from the highest levels. From leaders who demand ... regular reports on immunization levels, on the war against preventable disease and malnutrition, on school enrollment rates, and on the progress of today's low-cost solutions. From leaders who insist ... that the growth of their nation's children should be as well monitored as the growth of their economies. From leaders who begin an information revolution for the poor ... to put today's knowledge and essential services at the disposal of all.

And in the industrialized world ... From leaders who insist that a first call on aid programmes should be for the protection of the most vulnerable. And from leaders who commit their Governments to the principle of first call for children—at home.

The moral case is an obvious one. But the practical arguments too are becoming overwhelming. Poverty, turmoil, and environmental degradation are perpetuated by ill health, poor nutrition, and illiteracy. Unnecessary child deaths prevent the acceptance of family planning, pushing millions of parents into having more children than they want so that some may survive.

A renewal of the international effort to meet the needs of all children is therefore the greatest investment the human race could make ... in its economic prosperity ... political stability ... and environmental integrity ... An investment not only in today's children ... but in tomorrow's world.

Remarks by the Executive Director of the UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND (UNICEF), Mr. James P. Grant

Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, children.

Now we know why there is a Summit for Children.

One week ago, over a million candles were lit for the success of this Summit—each candle a prayer, in whatever religion, that today will be a turning-point in the lives of children. A turning-point for children everywhere, but especially for the children of the quiet catastrophe.

Never before have these children taken centre stage. Never before has their voice been heard in a forum such as this, but as the Executive Director of UNICEF it is my prayer that with this Summit their time has come.

It is a prayer that this Summit will make the 1990s into a decade of doing the doable for the world's children. And the new horizons of the doable are defined for us in the Declaration and Plan of Action we will be considering today.

It shows that child deaths can be cut by a third—and it shows how. It shows that child malnutrition can be cut by half—and it shows how. It shows that a better quality of life can be achieved for our children—and it shows how.

To lead this effort, we here today can raise a new standard for children of the years to come, and on that standard, on that banner, is writ large a principle—the principle of a first call for our children, the principle that children should be the first to benefit from mankind's successes and the last to suffer from its failures.

I want to thank the agencies of the United Nations family who have widened the horizons of the doable. I want to thank the thousands of non-governmental organizations who have made this Summit of yours into a global mobilization. I want to thank the initiators who had the courage—I repeat, the courage—to call this. And on behalf of UNICEF and the world's children I also want to thank you—you who have found time for the important in the midst of the immediate, you who have made this the largest gathering of world leaders in history.

Your Excellencies, there could be no greater gathering, and there could be no greater cause. For we are confronted here today with the noblest goal which mankind could ever set for itself—protection for the lives and the normal growth of all the world's children. It is within the power of those gathered here to achieve that great goal in our time.

And it is within the power of those gathered here to make this Summit into a turning-point, not only for the world's children, but truly for us all. For it is on how we bring up our children that our civilization is measured, our humanity is tested and our future is shaped.

Discussion Session I:

ENSURING CHILD SURVIVAL

Opening Remarks by the Prime Minister of CANADA, His Excellency The Rt. Hon. Brian Mulroney,

Co-President of the World Summit for Children

I declare open the first discussion session of the World Summit for Children.

The four themes to be addressed during the discussion sessions reflect the urgent problems facing children today and are mirrored in the Declaration and Plan of Action which have been drafted for our adoption. Interventions should refer to the provisions in the Declaration and the Plan of Action. This morning, as agreed, we are going to focus on three of the themes: "Ensuring child survival", "Protection of children" and "Enhancing child development". When we resume in the afternoon, we shall focus on strategies for implementing the programmes in the areas we have identified for priority action.

A word in regard to timing and procedure. In accordance with the procedure agreed to by all of our personal representatives, we shall devote 55 minutes to each theme. The themes will be introduced by two speakers, who will each speak for up to five minutes, followed by four speakers who will comment on the introductory statements, each for up to four minutes. The general discussion will then be opened.

May I remind you as well that for the general discussion the limit of three minutes per intervention must be strictly observed in order, obviously, to allow for the widest possible range of views to be expressed. An electronic device will indicate to the presiding officer, President Traoré or myself, when there are 15 seconds left for each intervention, but I am confident that I can count on your full co-operation so that there will be no need for me to interrupt your remarks.

If you hear this [gavel] I want to assure you, on behalf of the people of Canada, it is not a hostile act. I am under strict instructions from my Co-Presidents to follow the time-limits rigorously, and I know we will have your co-operation.

Finally, a word on activating your own microphones: when you take the floor, please press the button and wait for the red light before speaking.

In regard to the end of the morning, lunch will be served at 1:30, immediately next door. It will be a working lunch, and we will return for the afternoon discussion session with President Traoré in the Chair.

Our first theme, "Ensuring child survival", President Bush has already spoken on. He came by to see President Traoré and me a few minutes ago to indicate that it appeared that he might have a resolution of his budgetary problems in Washington, as a result of which he was going down there now and hoped to return just as quickly as he could, and so he asked me to convey his regrets for his temporary absence from our deliberations.

Introductory Statement by the President of the PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH, His Excellency Mr. Hussain Muhammad Ershad

Mr. President, in keeping with your request, I shall dispense with the customary salutations. I will, however, say how delighted I am to be here. So august a gathering, devoted to so noble a cause, is rare indeed.

Mr. President, today's children reflect the temper of our times. Theirs is no more a realm of unalloyed sweet dreams. Their domain is also frequently one of dark nightmares. The twilight of the twentieth century has been marked by transformations and trials on titanic scales. Changes and crises have moved in perfect tandem like Siamese twins.

The latest crisis is now riding roughshod over the Gulf region. The first tumult in the Middle East has interrupted the prospects of untroubled peace. Trouble seems to have become the way of life in our age.

The worst sufferers of our difficult times are those who are most beautiful, innocent and delicate: the children. We shall do well to recall that they are our future, our most precious resource. They are not just our responsibility but also our investment. We cannot afford to ignore them. With faith in ourselves we must work unitedly to ensure the survival and development of the child, even if the times are difficult and despairing. We may adapt the memorable words of Charles Dickens to our times and say: "This is the worst of times and the best of times."

If it is the winter of our discontent, it can also be transformed into a spring of our hope. The key is in our hands. Bangladesh has built the defence mechanism for its children on the basis of courageous confidence and coherent comradeship of social forces. Some of our non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have admittedly complemented our efforts. We have accorded top priority to helping and providing nutrition for needful children.

In 1985 our immunization coverage for children was only 2 per cent. It has now climbed to 65 per cent. By the end of 1990 we hope to achieve a target of 85 per cent.

Nearly 95 per cent of the people are now aware of the use of ORS. The extensive use of oral saline reduced the diarrhoea fatality rate to 0.02 per cent in 1990. The infant mortality rate (IMR), which stood at 153 and 117 per thousand live births, respectively, during 1965 and 1986, has been brought down to 110. Approximately 80 per cent of the people of Bangladesh now live within 150 metres of a hand-pump tube-well source of safe drinking water.

Education is crucial to the survival and development of children.

Bangladesh has passed the necessary law making universal primary education compulsory. My Government has also made female education up to grade 8 free. The Pathakali Trust, an organization for the education and welfare of disadvantaged and underprivileged working children, led by the First Lady, Begum Raushan Ershad, is the epitome of planned governmental and non-governmental efforts in a good cause. The Trust has already set up 60 schools serving the educational, medical and skill-training needs of more than 12,000 working children.

We have also started a programme for the distribution of high potency vitamin A capsules among children twice a year with a view to preventing blindness.

In order to control iodine deficiency disorders in children, the sale of non-iodized edible salt has been prohibited by law.

To encourage breastfeeding, we have introduced legislation banning the advertisement of breast milk substitutes.

There are more than 2,000 family welfare centres and mother and child welfare centres throughout Bangladesh. These centres extend health care and health education to mothers and children. More such centres are in the process of installation.

Ensuring child survival and development is a very significant aspect of our relentless war against hunger, ill health and illiteracy. This is a struggle in which we are comrades in arms—the entire world in general and developing nations in particular. That is why Bangladesh became one of the earliest signatories of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. We must win the war of welfare for our children. After all, what is the world worth without human beings with sound minds, robust health and generous hearts?

Excellencies, distinguished representatives, ladies and gentlemen: In conclusion, may I submit that the crying need of the hour is to prevent rather than to cure. If we want our children to live a full and rewarding life in a better world, we must build protective fences now around the edges of the precipice rather than provide a fleet of ambulances down below after the inevitable fall. Timely and united action today can place the resources of an entire world at the service of the preservation and development of the children who will inherit our tomorrow.

Commentary by the President of TURKEY, His Excellency Mr. Turgut Özal

Mr. Co-Presidents, dear colleagues: It is an honour and, indeed, a privilege for me to address this Summit Meeting on a subject of vital importance. The theme of child survival has been eloquently presented by President Ershad.

Today, millions of children die from diseases that are in fact preventable or curable at costs which are affordable. For example, measles, which causes the death of one and a half million children annually, can be prevented by a single vaccine that costs 13 cents. Similarly, diarrhoea, which takes a toll of 2.5 million children every year through dehydration, can be treated by a 10-cent pack of oral rehydration salts.

The point I wish to emphasize is that the eradication of those and other preventable diseases which kill and maim children can be done, but that requires a high level of political will and efficient management. If the leaders of the world succeed in making use of the technology available to us, mobilize our people and restructure health services to emphasize prevention, it is estimated that two thirds of the 14 million children who die every year can be saved.

We have all observed the positive impact of child-immunization programmes. As we approach the twenty-first century, a global eradication of such diseases as polio and neonatal tetanus can be our common target. There are other diseases, like cancer and AIDS, which have proved much more difficult to combat. In 1985 Turkey demonstrated and proved to others, in those early days of the child-survival revolution, that a populous country of modest means and difficult terrain could bring the most menacing of childhood diseases, measles, close to the point of disappearance. As a result of the Turkish National Immunization Mobilization, an estimated 22,000 child deaths were averted over the next year. Steadily high rates of immunization have helped us to continue to suppress measles since then. I am pleased to announce that Turkey has now reached universal coverage of all our infants with protection against six vaccine-preventable diseases.

Apart from the vaccine-preventable illnesses, can more of these childhood killer diseases be brought under control, or put behind us entirely, during the 1990s? At this moment there is an important surge in that direction in the scientific community around the world. At the cutting edge is a renewed serious discussion of a single-dose super-vaccine that children could receive soon after birth to protect them against all of the major childhood infections. With such a vaccine, a mother would need to bring her infant for vaccination only once, instead of having to make her way to the vaccination point four times.

The prospects of a new children's vaccine combining polio with the present triple antigen were discussed by scientists from around the world earlier this month in New York as a step towards the disease-elimination goals that this Summit will declare. I urge that the world community pledge itself to raising, perhaps at this meeting, the funds needed to enable the research breakthrough required for that vaccine so that millions of children can be saved.

I pledge that Turkey, with or without a super-vaccine, will arrive at the eradication of polio at least two years ahead of the year 2000 world deadline. That is the kind of concrete follow-up action that this Summit seeks and deserves.

I would like to express the hope that, with the adoption of the Declaration and the Plan of Action, our collective efforts for our children's survival will be a major step forward to prepare a better future for our children.

Commentary by the Prime Minister of BARBADOS, His Excellency The Rt. Hon. L. Erskine Sandiford

Mr. Chairman and Excellencies, we are all committed as leaders of our countries to the attainment of economic and social development for our people. The human-resource factor will be a crucial element. Our human resources should therefore be most carefully nurtured from gestation to adolescence, resulting in mature, well-adjusted adults' taking their rightful place in society.

But the reality is far different. By the end of this day's meeting another 40,000 children will have died. By the end of this year, half a million more women in developing countries will have died during pregnancy or childbirth.

In our countries too many infants die during the first month of life, and even those who survive may be destined to a childhood of disease and suffering if their mothers are malnourished or in poor health. Despite the advances of modern medicine, children are dying from diseases which could be prevented at relatively low cost.

It is now well established that pregnancies occurring to women under the age of 18 or over 35 tend to lead to unsafe motherhood. Other child-bearing patterns, such as too many births or too-closely spaced births, are also risk factors.

The goal of reducing the maternal mortality rate by half for this decade is attainable. Through outreach programmes we must disseminate more information to women and their partners about the availability of effective family-planning services and about the timing and spacing of births. Women should have a greater sense of control over their bodies and greater knowledge about factors affecting their fertility. Mothers so educated are more likely to have fewer children and provide better care for them.

We in the Caribbean have long realized that infant mortality and health are inextricably linked with maternal health. This nexus has led us to combine child-survival strategies and effective family-planning programmes as the most effective means of preserving the health of both mother and child.

A major concern to us in Latin America and the Caribbean is the high incidence of teenage pregnancies. Ideally, these teenagers should be reached before their sexual curiosity leads to this sorry situation. Family-life education programmes should assist in that regard.

An integrated approach can significantly improve maternal and child health in the region and beyond. Such an approach should be set within a framework of self-esteem and self-dignity.

It should also be based on a clear sense of moral values and a realization that the stable two-parent family is the best environment for the survival and growth of children.

I am happy to announce that the Cabinet of Barbados has given approval for the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The instrument will be deposited with the Secretary-General shortly. In the spirit of the Convention we the leaders must place the survival, development and protection of our children as a prime policy objecive.

Let us therefore pledge to mobilize all appropriate resources to ensure that children throughout the world survive the hazards of childbirth and childhood so that they may live to make the world a happier, more peaceful, just and equitable place in which to live.

Commentary by the President of CHILE, His Excellency Mr. Patricio Aylwin Azocar

(interpretation from Spanish)

To speak of the survival of the child at this time is to tackle one of most tragic problems confronting humanity. The degree of infant mortality is without any doubt a scandal of our day that must be confronted very seriously. I believe that with appropriate technology and international solidarity that is possible.

Child mortality is a problem that essentially affects the poor countries. The majority of children of the world are poor, and most of them who die are poor. The problem can be tackled with a fairly low level of resources, if the political will is there and if effective health and social services are in place. Experience in our country has shown that there is a high degree of national consensus regarding the health and survival of children. In the 1920s, Chile had 200 child deaths per 1,000 births. That was reduced to 165 in the 1940s and to 95 by the 1960s. In the 1980s it was reduced to 19.5, thanks to the sustained efforts by Governments of different trends.

What is necessary for the purpose is an appropriate definition of the problems, intelligent programme design, training of personnel, and intensive participation by the community. We know what needs to be done: pre-natal care, education of mothers, health care for children, appropriate nutrition, spacing of births, immunization, and a sound environment.

But, above and beyond everything, we need the care and love of parents and the stability of the family. Love is the major, the indispensable, the irreplaceable food. Our love for our children and our awareness of the fragility of their lives should be on our mind 24 hours a day. That is our constant commitment.

On behalf of the Government of Chile, I express our support for the international Convention on the Rights of the Child, which we have ratified. I publicly reiterate our resolute commitment to struggling with all our strength to solve the problem of ensuring the survival of the children of our world.

Commentary by the Vice-President of NIGERIA, His Excellency Admiral Augustus Aikhomu

Mr. President, Your Excellencies: We consider the provision of safe drinking water and improved sanitation very vital to our child-survival efforts. The World Health Organization (WHO) recently established that 80 per cent of all sickness and disease in some developing countries can be attributed to lack of safe water or inappropriate means of excreta disposal.

Most countries in Africa are committed to the improvement of the lot of rural dwellers, especially in the areas of sanitation and safe-water supply. For example, Nigeria has courageously shifted resources to the rural areas and urban shanty towns. The Better Life Programme emphasizes self-development, particularly for rural women, as regards education, business, sanitation, work and productivity. The Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructures opens up the rural areas by constructing access roads, provides bore-holes for safe water supply, and builds ventilated improved pit latrines in thousands of Nigerian villages.

In spite of all our efforts, and close to the end of the International Water Supply and Sanitation Decade in 1990, less than 50 per cent of the urban population of African countries will have access to a safe-water supply by the closing of the Decade. Sanitation coverage may also even be at about 20 per cent.

One of the most distressing water-borne diseases contracted from drinking unsafe water is Guinea worm. It affects 5 million to 15 million people annually, with a population of 120 million people at risk in Africa. Out of 21 countries with Guinea worm in the world, 19 are in Africa.

Guinea worm disease affects the health and economic well-being of the people. Mothers are unable to provide fully for their families' welfare because they cannot trade or do household work. Infected mothers often fail to take their infants for care or immunization. They may be forced to wean their infants prematurely, increasing the risk of disease in the baby, which has implications for family planning. Poor school attendance and permanent drop-outs have also been associated with the Guinea worm disease. In agricultural countries, affected farmers experience a substantial reduction in productivity and loss of income.

Many endemic countries in Africa are vigorously implementing programmes to eradicate Guinea worm by 1995. In Nigeria, we have intensified efforts on health education, provision of safe drinking water, and treatment of affected persons. People are taught to boil and filter water before drinking. Simple water pumps, fabricated locally, are fitted to bore-holes where pipe-borne water is not available. I must commend donor agencies such as Global 2000, non-governmental organizations, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), WHO, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for their role in working towards the eradication of Guinea worm, especially in Africa.

The eradication of Guinea worm by the year 1995 is not beyond the capability of the international community, which eradicated smallpox in the 1970s. We in Nigeria have the political will, a firm commitment and the resolve to do so. We also count on the support of the international community to support our efforts and those of the endemic countries to eradicate the disease.

Lastly, a global conference attended by about 600 participants from 115 countries—a conference in which Nigeria played a very prominent part—was organized by UNDP and the Government of India in September 1990 to mark the end of Water Decade 1980-1990. At that Conference, a brief Statement on Water and Sanitation on Behalf of Children was adopted as a framework for the development of water and sanitation programmes during the 1990s. I hereby deliver the Statement, which forms part of my delegation's contribution to the Summit.

Statement by the President of the FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY, His Excellency Dr. Richard von Weizsäcker

Children need all our care and love. For years, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has been drawing attention to that fact, meeting with a positive response in the hearts of my fellow countrymen. They want to contribute actively, as indeed does my wife, who is patron of the German UNICEF Committee. Children throughout the world need us badly, and all other problems should stand back. I should like to thank UNICEF for making us aware of that by organizing this gathering.

I speak for a country where children know very little of the dreadful poverty that the vast majority of the children of the world must suffer. We in Germany are privileged and are called upon not only to love our own children but to prove solidarity with children in other countries.

The wealthy industrialized States are urged to do far more than they have done to date, by introducing such concrete measures as vaccination programmes, which are perfectly affordable and achieve a great deal. Far too little is being done to ensure good drinking water supply as a prophylactic health care measure. Other problems, such as inadequate child nutrition, mortality in childbirth and illiteracy, also require our full attention and commitment. However, child survival can be guaranteed only by means of determined and appropriate development policy in general, and it is among the tasks of this Summit to underline that general task. One of the main causes of poverty and also one of its consequences is an excessively high birth rate. It is often the result of a poor economic situation and the lack of adequate social systems in many countries.

A central question confronting religious and ethical leaders and social authorities in both the North and the South is how the dignity of children as human beings can be safeguarded through family planning. Over-population leads to poverty inconsistent with human dignity. In many places, stemming the tide of population growth is literally a question of life and death for children. Too many children are born certain to die of starvation. Children can neither be fed nor clothed with an ethic which makes no call for, or contribution to, improved family planning. This responsibility lies with all of us. Economic aid is in vain if we fail to make progress in our common perception of the moral essence of the problem. Let us spare no effort to leave to the next generation a world which offers them not only the necessary room to live, but also an environment which allows life and makes it worth living.

Statement by the President of ARGENTINA, His Excellency Dr. Carlos Saúl Menem

(interpretation from Spanish)

We have become accustomed to discussions on development, to statements of need, statements of the aspirations of our people, statistics on the slow progress made in achieving our objectives and the clear fact that our means are inadequate. It is not that we have become insensitive to these problems, but we have become accustomed to a constant struggle. But now we are dealing with a problem which gives a sense of humanity to statistics, giving the face of a child to need, seeing the future reflected on innocent faces. The declaration that we are going to sign this afternoon bears witness to our consensus on the diagnosis of the situation. The Plan of Action which we will be adopting reflects the measures that we solemnly pledge to adopt. But what we are being asked today is not whether we are in agreement, not whether we have been able to grasp the importance of the matter here, as we meet in the largest Summit in history. What we are being asked is whether we are going to have the perseverance to fulfil the commitments that we undertake in the weeks, months and years to come. What children expect of us is that we fulfil those commitments and that we have the civic commitment to fulfil them in time.

Resolving the problems of hunger, malnutrition, health and education will not be the result of a formal ceremony or a heroic action of unanimous decision-making. Rather, it will be the painstaking work done consistently over a generation which can become efficient policy.

The development of children is a real possibility. It depends on our specific conduct in respect of situations that affect the lives of countries, relations among nations, and the fate of the entire international community. How can a country, which is forced by circumstances imposed upon it, take the steps that can ensure the survival and development of children if, at the same time, it needs to make savings in order to pay its debt burden? How can Heads of State and Government, we, gathered here today, talking about other matters, in practice, educate and provide health for our children in the future? We run the risk of disappointing those innocent eyes that look to us with the same faith that we place in them when it is their time to assume responsibility for society. This is a great battle for the integral health and development of children.

I propose that there be another Summit in a year, so that we can report to all the children of the world on what we have done on their behalf during that period.

Statement by the President of the REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE, His Excellency Major-General Dr. Joseph S. Momoh

It is an undeniable fact that, in any society, children are the most vital resource for future growth and development. It therefore behoves us all to accord our children's interests and welfare the top-most priority, which it richly deserves. As our children cannot, unfortunately, speak for themselves, it is but fair that we leaders and opinion-makers alike do all the talking for them. And that we must do with all the seriousness and urgency with which such an important matter should be addressed. Our attention has been drawn to the startling and awesome statistics showing that in every passing year, 14 million children die all over the world. Is it not a paradox that this should happen right in the midst of all the modern resources and scientific knowledge available to mankind? The tragedy of it all is that most of these deaths occur in the developing countries of the world, where life expectancy is already very low, especially in Africa south of the Sahara, which is among the most vulnerable, if not the worst affected, region. The miserable plight of the African child deserves special attention. We, as leaders and opinion-makers in Africa, are today totally committed to waging a relentless war on infant mortality. But our resolve is considerably constrained by the lack of the wherewithal. And this is where I call on the rest of humanity for a more positive identification with our cause.

In conclusion, let me invite all of you to share with me the contents of the following declarations, which were recently adopted at the national summit held in my country. The declarations are: first, that we collaborate with and mobilize all channels of communication, both at the mass media and interpersonal levels in order to promote and disseminate child survival and development messages to the public; secondly, that we involve community leadership fully in the planning and implementation of basic services in their localities; thirdly, that we accord high priority at Government, community and personal budget levels to the improvement of basic education, particularly for girls; fourthly, that we take every precaution to keep our environment clean and protect it against all activities that would precipitate degradation; fifthly, that we consider full security a primary objective, at national, community and family levels, to ensure that the most vulnerable groups—especially children under five, pregnant women and nursing mothers—are adequately provided for; and, sixthly, that we accept the articles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child as the basic standard against which our actions will be judged. My country has already ratified that Convention.

Statement by the President of the REPUBLIC OF SURINAME, His Excellency Dr. Ramsewak Shankar

Most of the problems affecting children have not been solved for decades. The economic and social constraints in the developing countries have hindered efforts of many of our Governments to promote the social well-being and the development of both children and women, which can be considered as society's most vulnerable groups.

One of the major elements in primary health care in my country is mother and child health, because mothers and children, who comprise a substantial proportion of our population, are considered to be high-risk groups in every community.

In order to assure this, health programmes are implemented by the Government such as:

- National child programmes emphasizing medical examinations and immunization;
- Clinics specialized in general health care for infants till 5;
- Programmes for day-care centres, pregnant women and young mothers, family planning and for dental care.

High priority is attached to early childhood development, including for disabled children in order to guarantee their right to fully and actively participate in society and to ensure a well-balanced and harmonious growth towards social independence and integration in society. Education is compulsory for children between the ages of 7 and 12, preparing them to develop common skills, physical health and cultural awareness.

My Government acknowledges that much remains to be done in both Suriname and the world in the field of child survival, but reiterates that the global economic problems need to be solved *first* in order to fully implement the lofty goals of this World Summit.

Statement by the Prime Minister of the COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA, Her Excellency The Hon. Ms. Mary Eugenia Charles

Health is important. Many small, third-world island States have succeeded in eradicating malnutrition. With a planned health service, Dominica has succeeded in improving its health care and its infant-mortality rate. However, intolerable housing conditions are a scourge that we have not yet conquered. We all agree that enhancement of the family unit, with a clear understanding of the family's responsibility for the survival of children, is necessary to the achievement of our goal. But with our present housing conditions, this is almost impossible. My hope is that this Summit will pay attention to the state of housing, which, for the third world, is a particular curse.

Statement by the Prime Minister of PERU, His Excellency Ing. Juan Carlos Hurtado Miller

(interpretation from Spanish)

Distinguished Co-Presidents, distinguished Heads of State and Government, Mr. Secretary-General, representatives: I should like, first, to extend my warmest congratulations to the six countries that took the commendable initiative of convening this Summit for Children. In the present circumstances, in which changes on the international scene are a source of hope and concern, of expectations and a considerable number of well-founded fears, it is highly encouraging that the leaders of developed and of developing countries are reaching agreement on what constitutes the hope of the world—children. In this context, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children, and the Plan of Action for Implementing the Declaration in the 1990s represent a solid support base for the economic programme that is being implemented in Peru. One of the basic pillars of the economic, stabilization and social-emergency plan now being developed and implemented is the draft on food and health assistance. Under this social-emergency plan daily care is given to about 7.5 million persons. Most of them are children, for whom we have broad programmes for the provision of milk and school-feeding.

For the Peruvian Government, the task of modernizing society should in no circumstances undermine the rights and needs of children. Therefore, my statement on the theme of ensuring child survival is not a casual affair; its contents are closely related to one of the country's basic social priorities. If we meet the goals that have been set for immunization, oral rehydration, nutrition and basic services, we shall have begun to eradicate one of the many factors explaining the structural violence that affects the societies of Latin America.

Peru is fully aware that responsibility is shared. None the less, the need to meet immediately those requirements that are basic to the survival and development of third-world children involves, in the short term, co-operation from the developed countries at higher-than-traditional qualitative and quantitative levels.

The new international scene, in which the world consensus on children has begun to promote greater harmony between peoples, is not unrelated to the commendable work that has been done by the United Nations under the intelligent guidance of its Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar.

We must now keep alive our concern for children and be consistent in our efforts. This is a task which transcends national borders, and to which all mankind must be morally committed.

Discussion Session II:

PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

Introductory Statement by the President of the REPUBLIC OF UGANDA, His Excellency Mr. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni

The children of Africa are among the most vulnerable in the world. Of the 30 countries with the highest under-five mortality rate—over 170 per 1,000—21 are in Africa. In the poorest 21 African countries, only 56 per cent of children of primary-school age attend school; only 36 per cent have access to safe drinking water; and for only 42 per cent are health units within one hour's walk.

Let me state the problems that constitute the major underlying causes of so many child deaths in Africa.

First, there is the authoritarian, top-down style of Government, which has failed to involve the people. The business of Government is sometimes conducted in writing, even though the majority of the people are illiterate. Africa is the only region in the world where Government business is conducted in languages that are foreign to the majority of the population.

Any serious effort to solve Africa's problems must begin by addressing the issue of liberating and empowering the bulk of the people through a systematic programme of education and participation.

Ugandans have been motivated into immunizing their children on an unprecedented scale. This year, we were able, by mobilizing the people, to attain the following levels of immunization: BCG, 92 per cent; DPT, 60 per cent; polio, 60 per cent; measles, 60 per cent; tetanus—a miserable level—20 per cent.

That is the first major problem.

The second one is the suppression of man by man, when man oppresses another man. In sub-South Africa we account for almost a third, or almost 4 million, of the world's officially recognized refugees and 12 million displaced persons. As you know, the phenomenon of refugees is due to oppression of man by man of one type or another.

The second phenomenon of oppression of man by man which affects Africa is the system of *apartheid* in South Africa, which has had a devastating effect on the survival and development of the black children in South Africa. In the 1980s the infant mortality rate in South Africa was 12 per 1,000 live births among the white children, compared to 124 per 1,000 for the black children. That happens in the same country. This shows the effect of oppression of man by man on children, the subject about which we are talking. That is the second major factor, as far as I am concerned.

The third major factor is the economic and technological underdevelopment. Twenty-eight of the 43 least developed countries are in Africa. The continent lacks sufficient capital and technology to initiate, promote and sustain its own form of development to become self-sufficient in all fields, including the very field about which we are talking. Due to declining commodity prices, many African countries resorted to heavy external borrowing. By 1989 the region's crippling debt was almost equal to its GNP and 3.5 times its export earnings.

Those are the major problems, but, as far as the specific question of protecting children is concerned, they can be tackled very easily with the external assistance, even if there are no indigenous capacities to solve them.

Our own experience has shown that if you immunize children, you ensure hygiene and protection, and you can bring down the infant mortality rate. We were able to bring the infant mortality rate down from 120 four years ago to about 70 now—that is, 70 children die out of every 1,000 born alive. So it is possible, with a modest input, to bring down the mortality rate of children.

The political documents which are before us underscore the need to protect children from the scourge of war by taking measures to prevent further armed conflict and to protect the essential needs of children even in times of war, through the observance of periods of tranquillity and special relief corridors for the benefit of children and the promotion of the values of peace, understanding and dialogue in the education of children.

There are children in especially difficult circumstances, and this covers children and victims of *apartheid*, foreign oppression and annexation; refugee children; children in natural disasters; children exploited through child labour; victims of the drug problem; and socially disadvantaged children.

The documents call for special attention to protection and assistance for children in this category in the context of national efforts and international co-operation, and I commend them for your adoption.

Thank you very much.

Introductory Statement by the President of the CZECH AND SLOVAK FEDERAL REPUBLIC, His Excellency Mr. Václav Havel

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen: A thousand times over the last decades I have seen in my country many bent backs, bent allegedly in the interests of children. A thousand times I have heard people defend their servitude to a hated régime by the argument that they were doing it only for their children—to be able to feed them, to make it possible for them to study, to be able to afford vacations at the seaside. A thousand times various acquaintances as well as strangers confided to me that they were in their mind and soul totally on our side—that is, on the side of so-called dissidents—and that they signed various petition campaigns aimed against us and organized by the totalitarian Government for the sole reason that they had children and thus could not afford the luxury of resistance. Immorality was thus committed in the name of children, and evil was served for their alleged good.

But I have seen even greater perversities, if only in the movies or on TV. I saw Hitler waving in a friendly way to fanaticized little girls of the Hitlerjugend; I saw the mass murderer Stalin kissing a child with the Red Communist Youth Organization scarf, a child whose parents ended up, like so many others, in Gulag camps; I saw Gottwald, the Stalin of Czechoslovakia, smilingly joking with young miners, the builders of socialism and soon to be cripples; I saw the Iraqi President Hussein patting the children of his hostages, whom, as he now says, he is ready to have shot.

I know and have experienced how in Czechoslovakia thousands of people suffered in Communist concentration camps, how hundreds of them were executed and tortured to death, and all this for the fake happiness of generations yet unborn in some fake paradise.

How much evil has already been committed in the name of children!

But I have also experienced something very different. I have even experienced it as recently as several months ago, a year ago, two years ago. I have experienced a beautiful revolt of children against the lie that their parents had served, allegedly, in the interest of those very children. Our anti-totalitarian revolution was—at least in its beginnings—a children's revolution. High school students and apprentices, young people, marched in the streets. They marched, and their parents were afraid. They were afraid for their children and for themselves. They locked the children at home; they drove them outside the cities on weekends. Then they started marching in the streets with them—first out of fear for their children, and later because they became infected by their enthusiasm. The children evoked in their parents their better selves. They convicted them of lying and forced them to take a stand on the side of truth.

And what about the children of dissidents? Although they could not study and had to endure the arrests and persecutions of their parents, they did not blame them but, on the contrary, respected them. They were more interested in the moral example than in the advantages stemming from a bent back.

Children in our country have proved false the ideology of sacrificing truth for an alleged interest of children. They revolted against their parents, who advocated this ideology. They joined the few who had been convinced from the very beginning that they served their children best if they did not look for excuses and did not lie but, rather, lived in truth and thus gave an example to their children.

The international community has achieved something unprecedented. Most of the countries of the world had within months joined an exceptionally good, precise and comprehensive international agreement for the protection of children. I rejoice, as we all do, in this achievement and am proud that I had the honour to sign the agreement on behalf of my country this morning. However, at the same time I believe that this agreement, or any other conceivable international document, cannot protect children from pseudo-protection; it cannot prevent their parents from committing more evil in the name and in the interest of children, whether in good faith, in self-delusion, or by deliberately lying, and from actually hurting themselves more than they can hurt their children.

As with any law, even this law can only acquire its real meaning and significance if it is accompanied by real moral self-awareness. In this case I am talking about the self-awareness of parents. That cannot be put into law. However, if it were possible, I would add another paragraph to the agreement I signed this morning. That paragraph would say that it is forbidden for parents and adults in general to lie, serve dictatorships, inform on others, bend one's back, be scared of dictators, and betray one's friends and ideals in the name and for the alleged interest of children, and that it is forbidden for all murderers and dictators to pat children on the head. Thank you for your attention.

Commentary by the Prime Minister of FRANCE, His Excellency Mr. Michel Rocard

(interpretation from French)

Distinguished Co-Presidents, Mr. Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Executive Director of UNICEF, ladies and gentlemen, I am happy to be able to speak on this topic after President Museveni, current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity, that is to say, from the continent where children are of great value but have also suffered tragically. I am happy also to have heard President Václav Havel's very moving statement.

When one knows that one can avoid the suffering of a child when that derives from ill-treatment, that deserves—demands—all our attention and all our energy. That has been perfectly understood by world leaders. They are demonstrating this today. Under the chairmanship of President Traoré and Prime Minister Mulroney, UNICEF has taken the initiative. The United Nations has given its support. Non-governmental organizations have made an unprecedented contribution.

That it took less than a year from the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child to its entry into force shows more eloquently than any speech how great the interest of the international community is.

My country, France, adopted and ratified it without the slightest hesitation, and the presence of all of us here bears witness to our common will to apply it fully.

Yet the meaning of our Summit, along with France's solemn commitment, is that we must go further and strengthen still further international co-operation in favour of children.

Children, all children, our own as well as those of others, have rights with respect to us all that we must constantly affirm and defend: first, the right to eat and to be protected against disease, abuse and exploitation. For whatever the forms and manifestations, the madness of men and the misfortunes of the world always come down first and foremost on those who have the least defence, on the weakest.

Among many examples, I am thinking of those orphans in Europe whose appalling condition the world recently discovered, at a time when one had thought that that continent was more secure than others.

The rights of the mother should be recognized, as when the mother is destitute the child suffers. And children are entitled to our protection to compensate them for their weakness. The extent to which we protect their dignity is the measure of our own.

Hence, is it not deplorable that this protection so often gives way to a certain disorder that, by convention, we call economic order?

That children should still die of measles and whooping cough—as has already been said—when there are vaccines, and not very costly ones at that, to my mind is intolerable and unworthy of mankind. Of course my country, faithful to its tradition, will actively continue its policy of research and development of new vaccines. Yet they must also be able to gain widespread use.

The comprehensive plan of assistance to the developing world, referred to last Monday in the General Assembly of the United Nations by the President of the French Republic, would make it possible to fight more effectively against these shameful inequalities, these injustices which, to use his own words,

> "in themselves constitute unbearable violence and that violence gives rise to still further injustices." *(A/45/PV.4, p. 46)*

To be sure, poverty is not the sole cause of misfortune. Every one of us has had occasion to read the love, the tenderness, sometimes even the sparkle in the eyes of the most deprived children, while we can see the distress of some segments of the youth of rich countries. The number of adolescent suicides, the increase in drug addiction, even the spread of AIDS keep us from reducing children's problems to that of poverty.

Emotional abandonment is a cause of mental retardation and despair for many children. The world project proposed in our Programme of Action will mobilize young people and bring them hope again.

Let us go even a step further. The claims children have on us go beyond protection. What kind of world are we going to leave behind for them: a world of violence and arbitrariness, or a world where they can live in peace thanks to the rule of law; a world given over to the anarchy of the law of the strongest, or a world that is organized and at peace thanks to the wisdom and authority of the United Nations, such as we have dreamed of it and as we see it at work in the present crisis; a world in which the wealth of some increases while the poverty of others deepens, or a world open, at last, to justice and sharing; a world that is befouled, irresponsible and ravaged, or a world with a healthy environment where nature is safeguarded?

These, too, must be reckoned among their rights, for the Earth is one and belongs to all. We are accountable to them for all this today, just as they will be accountable tomorrow to those who come after them. Such is the chain of life, and such must be the understanding of mankind as it marches forward.

When a child weeps, when a child dies, all mankind loses some of its dignity and hope. Often, preventing it simply depends on us. We undertake this commitment. Everything will reside in its implementation.

Commentary by the President of VENEZUELA, His Excellency Dr. Carlos Andrés Pérez

(interpretation from Spanish)

This historic Summit is an unprecedented opportunity for action for the survival, protection and development of the children of the world through political support at the highest level. The children whose basic needs we fail to meet today will not have a second chance.

Among the rights of the child, that of protection is among the vital, since it refers to those children which are facing especially difficult situations.

This applies to the case of street children. While there are no figures that enable us to know precisely how many children, because of abandonment and poverty, have invaded the streets of our principal Latin American cities, it is clear that this is a problem that is growing steadily. Among those children, the category of those living and working on the street is certainly greater than that of children who do not have family ties. None the less, the size of this contingent is already such that our Governments have increasingly been obliged to take special measures to tackle the problem.

These measures must be intensified in order to offer assistance alternatives to those who are completely unprotected and live in a world in which physical mistreatment and sexual abuse are frequent. The child who takes the path of delinquency is already a grim reality affecting our nations and clouding our future.

The case of child workers is also of great concern. They are usually school dropouts and are often victims of exploitation. They work long days and find themselves in a world in which they must defend themselves against the aggression and violence of adults, with whom they compete to protect their place in the labour market.

These situations, new in their magnitude and diversity in Latin American countries, reflect the terrible social deterioration that the region has been experiencing in recent years under the influence of the economic crisis worsened by debt. It is necessary, once and for all, for the international financial community to become aware of the intolerable consequences that the onerous terms of the debt repayment imposed upon us have for our countries. In order to reverse these consequences, it is essential that an increasing portion of our income be allocated to economic growth and to the implementation of programmes that can produce an immediate improvement in the standard of living of peoples. Only in this way will we be able to deal with the ultimate causes of social disintegration which these problems reveal.

The most crucial needs of children can be met if in our development strategies we give highest priority to the child. For this purpose it is necessary that the Governments of the industrialized and developing countries take concrete measures. To allocate 10 per cent of what the world might save through reduced arms production and reduced military expenditures by all countries towards meeting the needs of children might be a course of action commensurate with the commitment we are undertaking today.

May I propose that it be agreed at this Summit that the countries that sign the Convention hold next year a national conference on the child with the participation of the public and private sectors in order to assess the situation of children in each country and the measures to be adopted to fulfil the terms and provisions of the Convention. Venezuela has already taken the decision to convene such a conference on 29 August 1991, on the first anniversary of the enactment of the law on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which gave the Convention force of law in Venezuela.

Let us make this decade the Decade of the Child, the last decade of a century of turmoil and contradiction, in which the downward trend in the well-being of children of our world can be reversed for the sake of a more just world with a more human face.

Commentary by the President of NICARAGUA, Her Excellency Mrs. Violeta Barrios de Chamorro

(interpretation from Spanish)

What I have heard this morning reaffirms the feelings of solidarity of Nicaraguan and Central American children as well as those feelings of children and young people the world over.

The tragedy of children in Central America reflects the tragedy of children the world over. War in some of our countries has affected our children crucially; children have seen that they are extremely vulnerable.

But it is not only the violence of war that affects children. Malnutrition, poverty, lack of education are all tragedies of children. Peace is not just the absence of war. War begins in the minds of individuals, and this is also where the smiles of happiness of children arise. For this reason we need to educate people, to promote values, to promote tolerance, to have dialogue—for the sake of children. These values must be promoted from the very earliest time of our children's lives. Had that been the case, we would be living in a different world today.

More than 160,000 people died in Central America because of war. The economic crisis in Central America also takes its toll of victims, first and foremost among children. At the present time 12 million Central Americans, 40 per cent of our total population, live in conditions of extreme poverty. Approximately 1.7 million of these are children.

According to a study in Nicaragua by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), at the present time 578,000 Nicaraguan children under 15 years of age live in particularly difficult conditions, 215,000 children have been affected directly by war, 3,000 died, 1,600 were wounded or amputees, 16,000 were made orphans and 165,000 were displaced from their homes.

As President of my country I foster national and international reconciliation, and I am committed to strengthening peace, democracy and development in the region, aware that for development the promotion of the right to adequate education for Nicaraguan children is of great importance. I have issued a decree, which is now in force, creating a National Commission for the Protection of Nicaraguan Children. That Commission will begin a series of programmes to organize and provide for greater care for the children of Nicaragua.

The Nicaraguan people are determined to strengthen peace so that our children will be able to take their rightful place in the future.

Commentary by the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the UKRAINIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC, His Excellency Mr. Vitaly A. Masol

It is very hard to look a trustful child in the eye knowing that the mistakes committed by adults are being paid for by innocent children. How can we give hope to those who make their first steps in this life when the world's ever worsening economic ills are accompanied by the global crisis of the environment, when the media are full of reports about natural calamities and tragic technological accidents? And while the elements of nature may be well beyond our control, the idea that deliberate human activity is fraught with fatal consequences defies logic.

It was not droughts, floods and desertification, but unbridled industrialization that brought about environmental disaster in the Ukraine. By its long-term consequences, the Chernobyl accident has no equal among the disasters of the industrial age. Its adverse impact on the environment, the way of life and the health of millions of people in the Ukraine has become nation-wide. In the first days after the accident and for three weeks thereafter I directly participated in the elimination of its consequences. First and foremost we had to prevent an even more awesome tragedy: we had to evacuate more than 100,000 local inhabitants, and protect Kiev, with a multi-million population, from radioactive contamination. At the same time, prompt measures were taken to protect the Dnieper river, whose water resources are used by more than 35 million people in the Ukraine.

Chernobyl has affected everyone, but youngsters were those who suffered most. About 60,000 children who were irradiated during the first days after the accident have their thyroid glands affected by higher than acceptable doses of radiation.

We are deeply grateful to various international organizations, Governments and people of many countries for the help they gave us. The Government of the Republic is mobilizing funds amounting to many billion rubles and the entire scientific and technological potential of the Ukraine for the realization of programmes aimed at eliminating the consequences of the accident. We hope that the international community will take part in these efforts.

But do we have to wait for a nuclear accident in Chernobyl or a chemical one in Bhopal in order to demonstrate the best human qualities—compassion, sympathy, readiness to help those who are weaker or in distress?

It is vitally important today to disseminate as widely as possible the information on modern technologies in the production of baby foods to ensure large-scale realization of the achievements of medical science. Internationalization of scientific achievements will guarantee against a threat posed by industrial activity to present and future generations.

Under the auspices of the United Nations, we could start with an exchange of technologies and production methods accessible to all and safe for nature and man. It is possible that such exchanges will pave the way for improvements in the quality of industrial activity.

Can mankind meet the challenge it is now facing? Our children will live in a world which will be shaped by us. I hope that working together we will build a world worthy of human beings, a world which will be an inspiration for poets and artists in the second millennium and beyond, a world where children will always be happy and smiling.

And it is for the sake of this that we are today signing the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children and the Plan of Action for its implementation.

Statement by the Prime Minister of DENMARK, His Excellency Mr. Poul Schlüter

What springs to mind these days when speaking of the protection of children is, of course, the situation of the children affected by the crisis in the Gulf. My Government whole-heartedly supports the pledge in the draft Declaration to ameliorate the plight of millions of children in especially difficult circumstances, including victims of foreign occupation and refugee children.

Protection of children must be seen, however, not only in the context of freedom from oppression and war but also in a broad socio-economic context. Millions of children are threatened by disease, malnutrition and inadequate education. We must offer them opportunities for living under decent social, economic and environmental conditions.

I should like to single out one of the most important factors influencing socio-economic progress: population policy and family planning. Apart from its general impact, it has a direct bearing on the well-being of children, now and in the future.

In many countries, not least among the poorest, the population explosion is the single most important obstacle to development. If the population growth rate in such countries is not reduced, improvements in conditions for the great majority of children will be but marginal.

One last remark: the Convention on the Rights of the Child is a milestone in the endeavours to improve the conditions of children and their protection. Our Parliament is ready to ratify the Convention shortly after it convenes next week.

Statement by the President of the PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE, His Excellency Mr. Joaquim Alberto Chissano

For us in Mozambique, the commitment to mitigate the plight of the child and the mother constitutes a crucial component of the overall process of the country's economic and social recovery and development.

It was within this framework that we succeeded in expanding the health care and school networks so as to cover virtually the whole country in the first few years after independence. As a result of this and other activities which had been introduced in this field, the World Health Organization (WHO) recognized then that Mozambique had one of the most successful primary health care programmes in Africa. It is true that these efforts cannot possibly continue to produce the expected results as a consequence of the war and other atrocities resulting from RENAMO terrorist activities in Mozambique.

In the wake of such cruelties nearly 45 per cent of the primary schools have been destroyed, depriving over 600,000 children of primary education.

Over 900 health centres and dispensaries, representing one third of the whole primary health care network, have been destroyed or paralysed. Also, as a consequence of the war, it is estimated that about half a million children have lost their lives as a result of the combined effects of the direct impact of the war and the rise in the rate of infant mortality.

Recent surveys show that the rate of infant mortality in Mozambique—159 per thousand—ranks among the highest in the world and that the conditions of malnutrition tend to be progressively worse. Apart from being deprived of access to health care and education, the Mozambican child is also victim of brutalization by the armed bandits who teach them how to kill their own parents.

The Mozambican child experiences the trauma of having been kidnapped, raped and of having watched the killing of his own relatives.

About 400,000 Mozambican children live as refugees in neighbouring countries, and over 600,000 live in accommodation centres for displaced persons inside the country, while some others live abandoned in the streets.

This scenario demonstrates clearly the seriousness of the problems which Mozambique faces today and which threaten the survival and the harmonious growth of the Mozambican child.

In an effort to restore the physiological stability and the total rehabilitation of the child, the Government has embarked on a programme of reconstruction and rehabilitation of schools and health centres destroyed by RENAMO. Alongside the economic structural adjustment programme the Government is pursuing the following: first, mother and health care programmes; secondly, the tracing of the families of abandoned children; thirdly, the integration of children into families; fourthly, the establishment of a balanced system of mutually supportive community-based services, and, finally, the training of professional community leaders for an adequate handling of trauma-affected children.

In this context, we regard the peace efforts we are making in our country as a contribution to the search for ways and means to provide the Mozambican child with family stability, peace, security and tranquillity.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank UNICEF and the other United Nations family organizations for the support they are giving our children and their mothers. We are also grateful for the efforts of individual Governments, some of which are here represented, as well as the efforts of non-governmental organizations.

I am sure that our children will get more attention from the international community as a result of the commitment we all are making at this Summit.

Statement by the Prime Minister of LEBANON, His Excellency Mr. Selim El-Hoss

In addition to setting minimum standards for survival, health and education, Governments should provide explicit protection for children against violence, exploitation and abuse. This applies most pertinently to children under armed conflict. At present, over 20 wars are occurring throughout the world. These wars range from full-scale civil conflicts to multi-party conflicts and incipient guerrilla insurgencies.

Children's exposure to, and even participation in, war varies dramatically, as does the ability of parents, communities and nations to protect children from war. Some children bear arms or come under direct fire; some are kidnapped, tortured, brainwashed. As a result, some die or are physically handicapped for life. Some children watch in horror as parents, siblings, friends fight, flee or die. Others are separated from their families and become refugees in foreign countries.

Although basic survival needs take priority over psychosocial needs in time of war, there is a growing concern that such overwhelming experiences will have a damaging impact on the development of children, their attitudes towards society, their relationships with others and their outlook on life in general. Some parents or communities have been able to shelter their children from war. However, most families, drained of their resources after so many years of war, feel helpless in protecting their children from events beyond their control. Until we know how to prevent wars, the international community will want to do all it can to empower parents, communities and nations to protect their children from the most serious physical and psychosocial effects of war.

In fact, protecting children in areas of armed conflict is not only humanitarian in its own right: it may also be among the few viable strategies to end the generational transmission of violence that exists in some parts of the world. When parents, communities and nations cannot ensure protection, the direct efforts of the international community may become necessary to protect children's rights under conditions of war. These rights, and the national and international responsibilities, are articulated most fully in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. This international treaty, which came into force on 2 September 1990, offers the philosophical and political legitimacy required to guarantee the safety and rights of children.

Statement by the President of the PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA, His Excellency Mr. Zhelyu Zhelev

(delivered in Bulgarian; English text furnished by the delegation)

I find something symbolic in the fact that the signing of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child coincides with the beginning of actual political democratization in my country. The adoption of a new constitution and legislation based on universal human values is the main task of the present Bulgarian Parliament. I therefore believe that prompt ratification by Bulgaria of the Convention on the Rights of the Child will be a further expression of our desire to resolve our own problems in compliance with the norms and values of the world community. The Bulgarian public fully supports the aims and tasks of the present Summit.

The Declaration and Plan of Action to be adopted at this Summit will reflect our common concern and will be concrete efforts to provide normal conditions for living and the protection of the development of children.

The previous, totalitarian régime has left us a heavy legacy of serious problems in respect of children's lives and development. The infant mortality rate is still high in comparison with that of the other European countries. The polluted environment has an extremely dangerous effect on children's physical, psychological and mental health. There are still evident problems, such as the shortage of housing and school facilities for children. There is a shortage of adequate food, and especially baby food. Another source of alarm is the situation of the social orphans, who make up almost one in three children under 14. Standards of education are unsatisfactory. Juvenile delinquency, neglected children and drug addiction are problems now emerging after long years of concealment. All this is in addition to the specific problems caused by the present transition from totalitarianism to democracy, from a centrally planned to a market economy.

Today Bulgaria badly needs humanitarian aid, baby food and medicines. We ourselves are looking for new forms of social and legal protection for children and mothers.

I hope that with our concerted efforts, the international solidarity on behalf of the child, which is embodied in UNICEF, will help the nations solve the problems of children. This is the hope of a politician, a citizen and statesman, who is also a father.

I wish to express my deep gratitude to the initiators of this Summit, to the UNICEF Secretariat for preparing it and the world Organization for hosting it.

Statement by the President of COSTA RICA, His Excellency Lic. Rafael Angel Calderón

(interpretation from Spanish)

For the first time in history, the leaders of nations are responding to the noblest and most urgent task of our day: to save that silent majority, children, who, day after day, hour after hour, suffer the blows of hunger, lack of education, crime, war and exploitation. That is why the World Summit for Children is a milestone in the evolution of international relations. We are today at a decisive point in history. We, the peoples of the world, are struggling to meet our moral commitment, given the enormity of the problems suffered by our children.

In full awareness of the great importance of these circumstances, we Costa Ricans bring to this forum of nations a message of unlimited enthusiasm for the cause of children the world over, and a determination to struggle for it. We are convinced that this Summit must be something much more important than a passing meeting of Heads of State. We are convinced of this because of our moral values and our own specific experience.

Costa Rica is a small and relatively poor nation. Because of our meagre resources, we need to choose our priorities on the basis of criteria of legitimacy and urgency. Together with peace, democracy and development with a human face, we have pinpointed children as a legitimate and urgent priority. Therefore, on the basis of a strong national consensus, Costa Rica has succeeded in building an efficient system of nutrition, health care, education and protection for its children. We can say that the protection of children in Costa Rica is taking place within an integrated framework geared towards broad national goals. One of those goals is the protection of the family, since without the family there can be no childhood, there can be no society.

At the regional and international levels, Costa Rica fully supports the economic plan for Central America. We have taken significant initiatives for peace, and now we must also work for development. Without peace or prosperity, there can be no happy children.

In the specific case of Central American children, it is our fervent hope that this Summit will be a turning-point between two eras, between a sad, lost decade and a decade of new hope, for which we shall make enormous efforts.

Of course, we want a more free and more efficient global economy, but we also believe in adjustment with a human face. Efficiency must go side by side with justice. Any global effort for children will fail if we do not arrive at a just solution to the debt problem. The future of our children will, to a great extent, depend on solidarity among nations.

We support the efforts of the international community to close ranks against illegal and unjustified aggression and against drug trafficking that is a crime against mankind. In this regard, we commend the heroic efforts being made by the Government and the people of Colombia.

The Costa Rican people reaffirms its unconditional support for the principle of priority advocated by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and for the major goals of the World Summit for Children: the reduction of child and maternal mortality rates by 50 per cent, the elimination of severe malnutrition, the universalization of preventive health care for children, immunization, broad access to drinking water and to basic education.

Statement by the President of the CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC, His Excellency General André Kolingba

(interpretation from French)

I wish to tell you of the high priority we attach in our country to improving health conditions, the perinatal period and infancy—for it is true that my country's development can be achieved only if the problems of children are taken into account. Women and children represent 68 per cent of the population, who live in conditions characterized by poverty, infectious and parasitic diseases, lack of potable water and an inadequate health infrastructure. The mortality rate is quite considerable, since it stands at 235 per thousand.

In the past 10 years, with the scant resources at our disposal, my country has made great efforts on behalf of children. Thus, for example, the rate of vaccination has reached 52 per cent, the figure for health services for confinements has reached 84 per cent, and for post-natal consultations, 65 per cent. We intend soon to reach a 75-percent overall vaccination rate.

The efforts of the Central African State—despite enormous difficulties and thanks to the help of friendly countries and international organizations—prove our determination to ensure our population the minimum well-being. The results obtained, however, do not permit us to believe that victory is at hand, because faced with a rate of school attendance lower than 60 per cent, and with a known high rate of mortality, the Central African Republic knows that much remains to be done.

The international community must increase its aid and life-saving activities to help a population whose hopes dwindle from day to day. May this appeal be heeded, especially by those whose conscience must be awakened and by those who hope to see children enjoy a happy childhood throughout the world.

On behalf of the children of Central Africa, I thank you.

Discussion Session III:

ENHANCING CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Introductory Statement by the Prime Minister of JAPAN, His Excellency Mr. Toshiki Kaifu

(delivered in Japanese; English text provided by the delegation)

Mr. President, I have the honour to address the theme of "Enhancing child development".

It is estimated that in the world today there are one and a quarter billion children who are at an age when they should be receiving a primary education, and yet more than 100 million are not, because of poverty or because their countries are not at peace.

While the educational environment is better in material terms, problems stemming from the ills of modern society proliferate: the negative effects of education that places excessive emphasis on the acquisition of knowledge and a weakening of family ties. These problems cause serious concern about the future of children. What is important is to establish humane objectives for education.

In developing countries, the first priority should be to institute and improve basic education and raise the literacy rate among children, so as to enable them to live with dignity. There is a saying in my country, "Education is a century-long project". National development can take place only when all people have the opportunity to receive education. There should accordingly be no more argument as to which should come first, economic development or education.

In Japan, even in the pre-modern Edo period, many received a primary education—from neighbourhood tutors, or in the schools of the feudal clan.

After the Meiji Restoration, the new Government of Japan gave the highest priority to achieving universal primary education, in order to build a modern State, and to that end attached the greatest importance to the training and recruiting of capable teachers and the enhancement of their social status. Special consideration was given to the remuneration teachers should receive.

It is no exaggeration to say that the policy of promoting education constituted the very foundation of Japan's development. Speaking from my past experience as Minister of Education, I believe it is imperative for the State, which is responsible for maintaining the educational system and facilities, and the family, in which the child's character is formed, to work in harmony with each other as they perform their respective roles.

While education at home is the responsibility of both parents, the role of the mother is of particular importance, and it is therefore a matter of serious concern to us that 65 per cent of all illiterate adults are women. For if a mother is literate and adequately educated, she will provide an environment beneficial to the growth of her child, who can consequently receive an appropriate education at school. Indeed, as has often been pointed out, a mother is a child's first teacher.

This year has been designated International Literacy Year, and the World Conference on Education for All was held in Thailand. I understand that there attention was paid to the respective roles of the Government and the family, and that agreement was reached on such goals as expanding early childhood developmental activities, promoting basic education through the year 2000 and reducing by one half the illiteracy rate among adults, and especially women.

Building on what I have said so far, I would like to make the following strong appeal: first, the promotion and improvement of education should be given a high priority in national development plans. To that end, firm determination, action and strong leadership are required of all of us. Specifically, I propose that teachers in compulsory education systems be given favoured treatment with respect to the remuneration they receive.

Secondly, in forming the personality of the child, the family and the local community have critical roles to play. I propose that the importance of the education of girls be recognized, as they are the mothers of the future, and that under the guidance of international organizations the countries concerned adopt positive measures to improve literacy among women.

Thirdly, in the promotion and improvement of education, careful consideration should be given to the culture, customs and traditions of each country. It is therefore necessary that countries engage in self-help efforts, including the development of human resources, and my country will not stint in the co-operation it extends to them. In that connection, Japan intends to establish a trust fund for the promotion of literacy for the Asia-Pacific region and thus to promote basic education in that part of the world.

In conclusion, I wish to point out that world peace is essential if children are to receive an education free from fear and with hope for the future. We have great expectations as to the role the United Nations will play in bringing about a just peace, and I have high regard for its recent activities in this area. Japan, with its emphasis on diplomacy centred on the United Nations, intends to participate positively in the entire range of the activities of the world Organization.

We must always remember that it is children who are the greatest victims; it is children who suffer most when peace gives way to war. I would therefore like to urge that the leaders of all countries redouble their efforts to achieve world peace and stability.

Introductory Statement by the President of BRAZIL, His Excellency Mr. Fernando Collor

(delivered in Portuguese; English text furnished by the delegation)

Ladies and gentlemen, the enormous number of children in my country and their serious social problems made it imperative that I attend this meeting to attest to the willingness of the present Brazilian Government to face and to deal with these issues head on and, at the same time, to share with you our views on how we can work together to accomplish this goal, on the national level as well as through international cooperation.

Our responsibilities in this regard are on three basic levels: first, children need to have their basic human rights respected. Secondly, children also need to be assured the right to live in societies that enjoy the fruits of progress and that assure them living standards commensurate with the requisites of human dignity. Lastly, children need to be assured of the right to a protected and clean environment. Theirs is the future. Thus, it is our obligation to bequeath to them a habitable planet.

The ethical imperative before us is to confront the unacceptable reality of over 100 million children throughout the world dying before the age of five in the course of the present decade. It is our political and moral duty to reverse that trend, meeting the challenge with the required commitment.

On the national level, we must reallocate governmental priorities and concentrate resources on social programmes in the areas of health, education, housing and sanitation.

In Brazil we are making an unprecedented effort towards that end. Redeeming our children is the Government's highest priority. The new Statute on Children and Adolescents that I approved last May embodies the concept of full protection enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. We launched a programme entitled "Ministry of Children", aimed at efficiently and rationally bringing together different areas of Government to assist needy children. We have also launched a national literacy campaign on a scale perhaps never before attempted by any country in the world. In the area of health we have undertaken the greatest immunization campaign carried out in my country's history. We have outlined an emergency housing programme as a first step towards reducing the huge housing shortage in the country. At the same time we are seeking, through another plan, to improve ways to meet the basic needs of poorer people in the areas of sanitation and water supply. In the face of recent reports concerning threats to the human rights and to the very lives of children in my country, I have also called for the restructuring of the Council for the Protection of Human Rights, in the Ministry of Justice, with a view to converting that body into an instrument for the permanent protection of the physical integrity of Brazilian children. The Federal Government, together with State and local governments in cities where the problem is most acute, is already taking steps to put an end to shameful abuses perpetrated against children.

On the international level, we must work together to assure all children the full enjoyment of their basic rights.

For many of us, the 1980s were a time of crisis and economic decline. Millions of children paid the price for national economic adjustment programmes by forfeiting their physical development, health and education.

It is vital that economic growth coupled with social justice once again be accorded the highest priority on the international agenda and that this meeting represent a milestone of political determination in that direction.

Improved living conditions in real terms for children can only be secured through socio-economic development, the raising of general standards of material well-being and the establishment of an international economy able to do away with present distortions. To that end we must promote a just and lasting solution to the issue of foreign debt, including measures to reduce and convert funds for investment into social programmes on behalf of children. It is also necessary to reverse the process of net outflow of capital from the developing countries, to avoid protectionist practices that hamper North-South trade, to remove restrictions on the transfer of technology and to channel additional resources for investment.

The protection of nature has given rise in our day to intense international concern. We are glad that this is so. The adequate survival of our children depends on what we do today to salvage their future environment.

The preservation of the environment calls for constructive dialogue at the international level. It also requires that models of sustainable development be adopted throughout the world. We must meet the basic needs of the poorest among us by breaking the vicious circle that links poverty to the degradation of nature and by promoting genuine ecological awareness leading to a substantial reduction in present-day patterns of waste and depletion of natural resources. We must work together in the further development and dissemination of new and clean environmental technologies and in channelling, preferably on concessional terms, an increasingly greater amount of funds into the protection of nature.

Those are the challenges that lie ahead as an unavoidable stage on the path leading us to a world of peace and well-being, a world in which children are not punished for the errors and lack of foresight of generations that failed to perceive their role as adults as coterminous with responsibility for the future of humanity.

Commentary by the Prime Minister of the UNITED KINGDOM, Her Excellency The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher

First, I should like to congratulate the six sponsoring countries on convening this Summit, and particularly you, Mr. President, as well as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) for the excellent work it does for children throughout the world. I should also like to say that whoever compiled the video film that we saw did a wonderful job. It truly brought home to us the circumstances of many children throughout the world.

The theme I have chosen for my brief remarks is the family—first, because it is one that unites all peoples and all nations; and secondly, because unless we both identify and enhance the role of the family, we shall not succeed in bringing the better life to our children that we all seek. No bond is stronger than that of the family. It sustains us throughout life, in good times and in bad.

May I have just a little bit extra to my four minutes, Mr. President? I want to comment on one or two other things that have been said and, like you, I think it is sad if we don't get a little bit of debate.

I listened with fascination to President Havel's brilliant speech. He spoke of circumstances that many of us, fortunately, have never experienced. I wish to say that I understood both things he was saying. I understood why parents, being fearful for the safety of their children, in fact tolerated the lies and oppression of the dictator. We would all understand parents' fear for their children. I understand how that might have protected their children in the short term, but I understand too what President Havel is saying—that in the longer term it merely subjected many more generations of children to that oppression. It was wonderful to have it put to us like that, and I believe that many of us would like to say that it required a very special brand of courage to fight those dictators, the courage that President Havel had, as did many others whose names we do not know.

I should also like very briefly to say that most of us have not experienced the picture that President Chissano of Mozambique painted. I have seen some of the refugees coming from that country. The children are brutalized. The terror and cruelty are beyond what most of us could ever have imagined, as are the problems in Lebanon of which the Prime Minister spoke.

These are evil things in all three cases, evil things done by wicked people. They bring us hard up against the fundamental nature of human personality and character. In the one case, this is dealt with by supreme courage, and, in the other, we have to do all we can to try to resolve those conflicts.

However, the remarks that I shall make are not particularly addressed to those, but to the way family life has its problems in both the West and the developing countries, albeit of a different kind and a different order. Most people, generally, are anxious to do the right thing for the children, to give them a better life. That is the most natural ambition in the world.

For children, the family is the most important factor in their lives. The dominant influence on a child's health is the family. Does the mother look after the child and go for the injections that she can get? The dominant influence on a child's behaviour is the family and the example it sets. The dominant influence on the success of a child's education is the interest taken by the family in the work of the teacher and the school.

The most important things we can do as parents, I believe, after looking after the material needs of our children, is to give them our time, our affection and our wise counsel. If we fail to do that, and something later goes wrong, we should never cease to blame ourselves, and we should always ask: "Did I take time to understand their problems, to talk things through with them? Was I patient enough? Did they know that home was the place they could always turn to and find loyalty and affection, no matter what happened?"

We also need to give children fun and laughter. It is important to build in happy memories, because they stay with children all their lives, reminding them of the warmth, the laughter and the togetherness of home.

Yet we are finding many family difficulties in the Western countries. That is a lesson that economic progress does not necessarily solve human problems. We still have homelessness among young people, we still have juvenile delinquency, and the use of drugs often has its roots in family breakdown or unhappy family circumstances.

In developing countries, as so many speakers have said so graphically, the problems are of a quite different order. Parents often have to toil unremittingly to provide the barest necessities of life, with little time to devote to their children. Television brings us horrifying images, which we cannot erase from our minds: desperate mothers in famine-ridden countries, their babies in the last stages of malnutrition; and parents in Kurdish villages, as some have already referred to, trying in vain to shield their children from the effects of Saddam Hussein's chemical weapons.

The children of families such as these can know none of the joys, the happiness or the security that should be the right of every child. What can we do? How can we help? Colleagues have already listed some things. Most of all, children need to be protected from war and from want. That is something with which the United Nations can help. We may not always succeed, but we must always continue to try and extend the help we give, whether it be in resolving conflicts or in bringing material help to the children.

We must try to see that the Convention on the Rights of the Child is observed far and wide. It is not going to be enough to sign it. Those things must be observed. I should like to refer particularly to the terrors of child abuse and the trade in child pornography. Those are a blot on civilization. Or should I perhaps not use that phrase? Perhaps "civilization" and "society" are too remote. Let us be more blunt about it: these things are caused by the wickedness of individuals; they must be caught and brought to justice and punished very severely.

More of our help to the poorer countries should be devoted to the needs of families and children. I believe we should make a special effort to stamp out the diseases that are most likely to maim or kill children. Colleagues have referred to them. But this should be done not only through UNICEF or Governments. Many will know that

Rotary Clubs across the world are raising enough money to immunize every one of the world's children against polio. So our duties are not absolved when we have done the things that Governments can do or even when we have done the things that families can do.

The greatest pressure on the Earth's resources, and therefore on the quality of life—and above all family life—comes from what some other colleagues have referred to: unprecedented population growth. The population of the world at the time I was born was 2 billion. It will be 6 billion by the end of this decade. And there is no way in which we shall be able to solve some of the world's problems if population continues to grow at such a high rate.

Family planning is absolutely vital. Otherwise, we shall not be able to get on top of the problems we now have, nor the environmental problems. And I think a thing which particularly affects us, perhaps, in the Western world is absent parents. We should prevent absent parents, mostly men, from walking away from their responsibility to maintain their children. We find single parents—the father has just disappeared. They have a responsibility to maintain the children, even if they walk away from it. Parenthood is for life, and to deny that is the greatest deprivation you can inflict upon a child.

I want to make a particular point here. The help that we give through UNICEF or through Governments is not meant to substitute for the responsibilities of parents. We must not think we can cast all our duties onto Governments. We cannot. The assistance that Governments and UNICEF give is to help parents the better to carry out their responsibilities more fully and effectively.

Just as we want to transmit a good environment and an ecologically stable world to future generations, so we want to hand on a world with children from secure and loving homes to be its future parents.

We all have to have ideals, and we all have to find wonderful language in which to express our thoughts. Very few of us can do it. Not many presidents or prime ministers are writers, although some attain that higher distinction. We have a rather lovely poem in English—which says: "Know you what it is to be a child? It is to believe in love, to believe in loveliness ... it is to see the world in a grain of sand and Heaven in a wild flower. It is to hold infinity in the palm of your hand and eternity in an hour."

So many children are denied these joys, and what we say seems pitifully inadequate. But we go away from here knowing that it is what we do that will count.

Commentary by the Prime Minister of SPAIN, His Excellency Don Felipe González

(interpretation from Spanish)

I will contribute to winning friends for the Chair by being very brief.

First of all, I would like to say that I am in complete agreement with the draft Declaration and with the proposed Plan of Action. This Summit expresses the political and ethical commitment that we attach to this Declaration and Plan of Action. I can say that, in Spain, developments have been positive, both as regards problems of survival and protection and as regards the development of children. We are in a position strictly to implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child. We believe, as Mrs. Thatcher has just said, that it should be universally applicable. I am aware that problems related to children are not economic alone. Just as I am aware of this, I believe it is essential for agencies such as UNICEF and others to have the financial resources they need in order to implement the proposed plan of action. I, therefore, wish to state that my country pledges to implement the Plan of Action which will emerge from this Summit. I repeat, this is not enough to resolve all problems, but it is necessary, and we will assume our responsibilities *vis-à-vis* the international community.

One more comment, in agreement with words that we have heard here. Undoubtedly, at the root of the struggle for the development of children, there are family problems involved, there are moral problems and, above all, there is a problem of economic development. Some of those who have spoken have already said this. But I would like to draw attention, in agreement with what was stated by the President of the Federative Republic and by Mrs. Thatcher, that it is not possible, even with a good level of development, to give a response to global demographic growth if we do not take reasonable family planning strictly into account. There will be no balance between economic growth and our response to galloping demography, such as the situation that we are confronting in our world today. So I think we need to be aware of this. And if we work in that direction, then most likely we will be able to act in defence of children and to protect children better than we can with lofty statements.

Commentary by the President of the Presidency of the SOCIALIST FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA, His Excellency Mr. Borisav Jović

(delivered in Serbo-Croatian; English text furnished by the delegation)

I am honoured to be attending this gathering dedicated to children, with such noble and humane objectives. May I pay a tribute to its initiators and express our appreciation to UNICEF and its Executive Director, Mr. Grant, for their dedicated efforts in preparing and organizing this World Summit for Children.

In addressing the subject "Enhancing child development", the previous speakers have shed light on different aspects of this issue. I wish to draw your attention to the importance of environmental conservation for the destiny of the children of today and of future generations.

Environmental degradation imperils the fate of all mankind. Ecological disasters with dramatic consequences are a serious warning of what the future holds in store for us if nothing meaningful is done. This afflicts children the most, as they are still in the process of development and, at the same time, incapable of defending themselves or recognizing danger.

The present-day generations bequeath their mistakes and delusions to the coming generations. Mr. Milorad Pavić, a well-known Yugoslav author, says:

> "Children are the ones whose water we are drinking and whose land we are polluting. ... We have already torn their sky by marking holes in the ozone layer of the Earth, and underneath that torn sky we are leaving them hunger as our legacy."

It is high time that we give this serious thought and do something about it.

Ecological problems have also become acute in those countries which have undergone rapid development over the past few decades. However, thanks to their affluence and material potential—they have been managing to resolve environmental issues more successfully, primarily by the transfer of so-called dirty technologies to the less developed parts of the world. Therefore, ecological problems are being manifested most critically in developing countries.

It is for that reason that I wish to emphasize the fact that over 1 billion people, i.e., one fifth of mankind, still do not have enough food, clean water, conditions for an elementary education and basic health care.

Therefore, we cannot look forward to substantive progress in creating an ecologically sounder society if development and the problems of glaring inequality and poverty are not dealt with beforehand. However, poverty and ignorance lead to mistakes in a large number of these countries already in the first stage of industrial development, a fact which has a very adverse effect on the environment. The cruel price of ecological failures is paid most dearly by children, as the least resistant human beings, who are, at the same time, unable to protect themselves. It is in the interest of the entire international community to create conditions for the more balanced economic and technological development of all countries, which would take into account the ecological dimension, not only the financial one.

At their ninth summit conference, held in Belgrade in September 1989, the non-aligned countries, particularly stressing the dimension of the threat posed to children's lives, adopted a special document on these problems, entitled "Child survival and development".

Just as Yugoslavia unreservedly supported the initiative to hold this Summit for Children, it most resolutely upholds the adoption of the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children and the Plan of Action for Implementing the Declaration.

I wish to assure you that, within the scope of its national policies and legislation, Yugoslavia will do everything in its power to bring these objectives and tasks to fruition.

Commentary by the President of the GAMBIA, His Excellency Alhaji Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara

Your proposal, Sir, meets with my approval, as I have no option!

In the past few years, commendable results have been achieved in improving child survival through oral rehydration therapy, immunization, and the wider use of antibiotics. These efforts must, of course, be sustained and intensified. But child survival must not be an end in itself; we must focus also on the development of the child to his full potential. To this end, at least three factors are essential: a stable and peaceful social environment, including a stable family environment, as was stated so eloquently by Prime Minister Thatcher of the United Kingdom; proper nutrition and health; and education.

I want to focus on education. Education and development are two sides of the same coin. It is vital that children, who are the human resource of mankind and the leaders of tomorrow, be given comprehensive, high-quality and relevant education in their formative years, when they are most responsive to their social and physical environment.

It is said that the debt crisis and subsequent cuts in government expenditure in developing countries, exacerbated by rapid population growth, have adversely affected the quality of primary education, resulting in high rates of drop-outs, dilapidated school buildings and classrooms, and inadequate furniture and textbooks. The international community has a moral responsibility to increase the level of aid for primary education in the developing countries. The World Bank's loan facilities, providing for the allocation of further funds for primary education, are justified, but, in my view, the $1.5 billion that the Bank, at the World Conference on Education, pledged to lend annually should be reviewed and increased. This is imperative, as is indicated by these remarks of the President of the World Bank:

> "People are the ultimate resource. Sustaining that resource is the all-encompassing goal of development, and education is the well-spring of development."

Again, the debt crisis and reduced government expenditures have acted as a brake on the idea of education for all.

Today—in 1990—approximately 100 million children between the ages of 6 and 11 do not attend school, and one in four adults in the world—almost 1 billion people—cannot read or write.

The declaration of 1990 as International Literacy Year could not have been more timely, especially for women, who, in the developing countries, are actively engaged in all sectors of the economy, especially agriculture. They need literacy and numeracy skills to deal with their marketing management transactions, to improve their productivity, and to generate income for the family. Such family welfare would have a beneficial effect on the children by enhancing their development.

Literate mothers appreciate family planning better, and they feed and care for their children better. Female enrolment for education should therefore be accorded high priority in developing countries. Modern communication techniques should be used to provide education on family planning, food production, nutrition and the environment. An illiterate female population is not conducive to the development of a country's human-resource base. As the saying goes:

> "When you educate a man, you educate an individual; when you educate a woman, you educate a nation."

Projects such as "Women in Development", which is sponsored by the World Bank, should be accorded high priority for international support.

Statement by the President of HONDURAS, His Excellency Lic. Rafael Leonardo Callejas Romero

It is with great interest and hope that my country—Honduras—is taking part in this Summit. Our presence is an expression of my Government's commitment to do its best to protect the interests and the future of our children.

I shall refer briefly to two subjects—one that is of a general nature, and one that is extremely specific. The first involves the severe economic and social crisis that affects the Central American region. In this regard, of course, Honduras is no exception. We have an obligation to face this crisis very seriously and responsibly. We are aware that only by generating sustained economic growth shall we be able to protect the future of children and of our homeland.

It is not easy for any Government to take measures of economic austerity. Such measures imply enormous sacrifice, and that can have an extremely grave impact on the most impoverished sectors. In our case, 70 per cent of the population are poor, and 54 per cent are in a state of extreme poverty. The mortality rate is 80 per 1,000; 42 per cent of children drop out of school in the third grade; almost 48 per cent of mothers are single.

Hence, this requires that, as and when economic adjustment programmes are put in place—programmes which can seriously undermine the welfare of children in the short run, given their vulnerability—international bodies and contributing countries establish a social security net with the aim of expeditiously providing resources for programmes aimed at child nutrition and the single mother, with the goal of mitigating the immediate impact such adjustment programmes usually have on the poorest sectors.

Specifically, and in the context of this World Summit for Children, I would request the industrialized countries to help in the struggle against drug addiction in children by eliminating toluene from the glue they produce, since that substance contributes greatly to such addiction.

We were one of the first 20 countries that ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and our participation in this Summit reflects our strong commitment to the vitally urgent task of guaranteeing the improvement of the lives of children in the long term.

Statement by the Prime Minister of FINLAND, His Excellency Mr. Harri Holkeri

After listening to the discussion, I am still convinced that whatever measures are taken, two factors will ultimately dictate the results of our joint Plan of Action. These two factors are: population and environment. The issue is whether we will be able to halt population growth and degradation of the environment. Successful management of these two fundamentally interlinked problems is the prerequisite for sustainable development.

Our generation already has the required knowledge for efficient population control. What is needed in most parts of the world are policy decisions on domestic efforts to support family planning, child spacing and related activities which favour smaller family size.

Our own national experience in Finland clearly demonstrates that improved primary health care services lead to the desired decrease in birth rates. Alongside international support programmes, the national decision makers are still in a key position to initiate new, efficient programmes.

The other challenge the political leaders face is the degradation of our natural environment. The farther away from home a mother has to look for clean water and firewood, the farther away sustainable development remains—and the vicious cycle of poverty and environmental deterioration will never be broken. Of course, the pressure on nature calls for international action; special efforts are needed in industrialized countries to protect our common ecological base on Earth.

Let me join those who have referred to the protection of children during armed conflicts. The recent crises have repeatedly demonstrated that children are the most vulnerable group being victimized by political upheavals and wars. Children are unable to protect themselves. If we are not able to build the foundation for a peaceful world, we will not be in a position to build a sound ecosystem and healthy life for our children, nor for their children either.

Statement by the President of COLOMBIA, His Excellency Dr. César Gaviria

(interpretation from Spanish)

I wanted on this day, to talk about the success of my country's new programmes to protect children: the code for minors, the $200 million we spend every year for child nutrition, the $100 million we spend every year under a specific programme to reduce child mortality. None the less, given the situation in my country, I am obliged to refer to a problem that affects the children of developing and developed countries alike, that jeopardizes the children of the future and not only those of the present—that is, the problem of drug trafficking.

My country is making enormous efforts on the basis of our principles, not only because of our commitment to the international community to confront the problem of drug trafficking, but also because there is an enormous cost in human lives involved—the lives of our best and youngest leaders. In the last electoral campaign alone, we lost three of our presidential candidates—half of the candidates, in fact. We have lost many of our judges, our lawyers and our police officers in our struggle to combat this terrible scourge of mankind. We are involved in a struggle to which we have devoted all the strength and efforts of our nation and a good part of the resources allocated for children. That is why I wish to cite some figures. Almost $1 billion has been allocated this year to combating the problem of drug trafficking, much more money than we are able to devote to our children. This is a problem where children are extremely vulnerable, not only in terms of drug use—which we find in schools and colleges in the developed countries as well—but also in terms of criminality. Most of the crimes in our country related to drug trafficking are committed by children under the age of 15. This shows the extremes to which the problem of drug trafficking can lead.

Just as we have mobilized collectively to face the problem of the environment and to deal with the situation in the Middle East in order to protect a small, defenceless country, the international community should mobilize its efforts to fight drug trafficking.

This Organization, the United Nations, where we are meeting, has three agencies dealing with this subject instead of one, and the subject is sometimes treated in a rather bureaucratic way and not with the seriousness required for a problem which, without any doubt, is one of the gravest problems affecting the future of mankind because of the great threat it poses to our children.

Therefore, my country, which is making this vast effort—and making it much more intensely than other nations—asks the international community to demonstrate more seriousness and more multilateralism in combating the problem of drug trafficking, and to tackle it not only in terms of interdiction but also in terms of consumption. In the developed countries—certainly Japan and those in Europe—drug use is increasing much more than it is being reduced in the United States. That is a problem that affects all of us equally and that mankind must deal with.

Statement by the President of the UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA, His Excellency The Hon. Ali Hassan Mwinyi

In its report for 1989, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) reminded us that "in how we bring up our children are sown the seeds of peace and prosperity or of violence and degradation". The presence of so many Heads of State and Government at this Summit raises our hopes for a world consensus to save succeeding generations from the scourge of abject poverty, hunger, malnutrition, disease, *apartheid* and other man-made calamities.

Tanzania believes that there is an inherent relationship between economic prosperity and the well-being of children. As a result of growing poverty in many developing countries, many children are faced with the problems of a lack of clean water, inadequate primary health care, malnutrition, insufficient food and limited educational facilities. It is true therefore that millions of children are growing up in circumstances which mean that they will never fulfil the mental and physical potential with which they were born.

In Tanzania great efforts were made during the first two decades of our independence to expand essential social services, including health, education and water for the benefit of our children and our population as a whole. Those efforts were made with the support and assistance of friendly countries and international organizations, including UNICEF. The Government has put increasing emphasis on communities' own responsibility for basic social services. Self-help schemes are encouraged, and communities are expected to make contributions to the cost of maintaining the primary education system, the health system, and water supply schemes. As a result of those combined efforts, infant mortality was reduced from 171 per 1,000 births in 1967 to 105 at present. Life expectancy has increased from 35 years at independence to 51 years at present. More people now have access to clean water. Illiteracy has been eradicated by more than 85 per cent.

But our ability to sustain those services has been greatly eroded by the current economic crisis which has affected many developing countries. That crisis has caused a great loss in income through declining world commodity prices, rising costs of essential imports, and debt servicing. The results are not hard to find. Health care has sharply deteriorated because of an acute shortage of essential medicines and equipment. Educational equipment and supplies are in dire shortage. Unfortunately, those who suffer most from this deterioration are our children. Their hope for survival and a better future depends on our collective efforts to create a favourable world economic environment which would be conducive to development efforts and would enable families to meet the basic needs of their children through their own efforts. That can best be achieved through genuine co-operation between all nations of the world to combat poverty. We know that the world has the means and resources to eradicate that poverty.

Statement by the President of ROMANIA, His Excellency Mr. Ion Iliescu

Mr. President, dear colleagues: Those who remain insensitive to children have lost their belief in the future of mankind. Our gathering here, for the first time in history, is a living testimony that we are looking ahead. It is proof that we want to have a future.

Unfortunately, in Romania we inherited a tragic situation from past political régimes. As a result of wrong policies, an impressive number of children were disregarded. I have particularly in mind the orphans and the disabled. They are part of our society. We deplore their suffering, and we are ready to take all necessary steps to overcome the present situation. Now we will have to see the crude reality, and we will have to cope with it. In a free and open society such a tragedy can no longer be silenced.

In facing this serious matter, the Romanian people felt encouraged by the assistance we were provided by friendly countries. We have been moved by such solidarity, and we are deeply grateful to those who cared for our needs. But we are aware that the main effort has to be made by us. Child development requires a strategy whose design will be well thought out and whose implementation will be consistent.

A few days ago Romania ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the forthcoming legislation will be aligned to those international standards. Our new Constitution will guarantee the right of the child to develop and will protect the mother and the family—an issue that was so rightly emphasized here by Prime Minister Thatcher. Improving the health of the younger generation, the quality of their life and their education will be a high priority. We are building an educational system focused on the human personality, in conditions of freedom and dignity. In pursuing such a policy, we find valuable guidance in the Declaration and the Plan of Action we are about to adopt.

We acknowledge that the status of the children and of the most disadvantaged categories of the population is indicative of the level of development in a country. We know that we still have a lot to do in this respect. We want to learn from others how to solve everyday problems and in particular to make public opinion and authorities sensitive to the importance and urgency of the needs of children. That is the spirit in which we attend this Summit, and I warmly congratulate its initiators.

Statement by the Prime Minister of ICELAND, His Excellency Mr. Steingrímur Hermannsson

So many good words have been spoken around this table today that I find very little to add. Not having been given time to comment on the fine speeches, I shall limit myself to two items which I found to be rather lacking.

To start with, I should like to stress the extreme importance of basic education today. It should be given a very high priority. It is necessary not only for the development of the child itself, because only a well-educated youngster is able to communicate properly in the complex society of today—but also for the country itself, because only a country with a large group of healthy and well-educated youngsters is able to develop properly in this age of technology and information.

I should also like to stress that every country's education must be based on its own cultures and thus strengthen the identity of that country. We in my country, Iceland, have found this to be extremely important.

Then I should like to say a very few words about the problems which we have in the so-called developed countries and which we have not discussed very much around this table. We in Iceland are very fortunate with respect to children's welfare. The mortality rate of infants is only 6 per 1,000—a 99.4 per cent survival rate, which I believe is, along with Sweden's, the highest in the world. We have a literacy rate which I think is as high as can be achieved. Yet we notice in this fast-moving society of today, with the increasing demand being made for material gains, that there are problems in the development of children.

And what about youth violence and drug problems in the big cities? Can that not be traced to something having gone wrong with the development of the children? I believe that we in the so-called developed countries have to face those problems much more seriously than we have done so far.

In conclusion, may I agree with those who have stressed here that progress in the economic and other fields has to go hand in hand with the implementation of the fine words we have spoken here and the Declaration that we have yet to sign. Economic progress is necessary in so many, if not all, countries of the world. And may I finally also agree with what President Havel said. A totalitarian Government today will not honour proper and free education for children any more than it did in the past. Thus all progress—economic and political—has to be secured in order to see those things happen, come true, which we are promising today.

Statement by the President of URUGUAY, His Excellency Dr. Luis Alberto Lacalle

(interpretation from Spanish)

Mr. President, we have been listening to very distinguished statements on items on our agenda, but now we wish to speak about improving the development of children. While disease, war and violence have a negative impact on that development, we also have to take into account another dimension of the child—the child as a human being in his intellectual and spiritual dimension. Together with the aggression of poverty and of war, we have another type of aggression, an aggression of the spirit, of the soul, of the intellect that is being formed. These acts of aggression take place through the communications media, which have become a source of education, teaching violence, degradation and all the defects of the human race. Prime Minister Thatcher said just a while ago that we have to give our time to our children, but when we do not give them that time, they occupy it by listening to the mass media, from which day by day they learn bad examples, the demonstration of the ills of mankind often glorified and presented perversely as virtues.

A child at the age of 18 has seen more than 100,000 killings on television; over 100,000 violent deaths have been witnessed on television by that age. Hence, the enormous damage being done by a magnificent medium in developing and developed countries alike, right in the home, without any distinction between children in the United States, Europe, Africa, Asia or Latin America. This is why we Heads of State must say that we completely agree with article 17 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which our Government has just signed. That article says that the States Parties will encourage the mass communications media to disseminate information and material of social and cultural interest to the child. Of course, as far as the right of information is concerned, that must be ensured. But as Governments we must all—and I appeal to my fellow leaders—fully enforce in our lands whatever rules we have in order to avoid violence, pornography and all those other forms of aggression against the child that occur in our own homes day after day, and that we invite—that is the word—the communications media in all countries to exercise their freedom to inform in a responsible way, their right to enter into our homes in a responsible way so that we can protect, along with the physical integrity of our children, their souls and spirits.

Statement by the Prime Minister of the REPUBLIC OF VANUATU, His Excellency The Hon. Father Walter H. Lini

First, may I, on behalf of my people and the Government of Vanuatu, express our deepest appreciation to you, Mr. President, and to the other initiators for the steps that you have taken to make sure that the Summit was convened and also to express our deepest gratitude to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), which has organized this very important meeting.

Also, may I personally express my happiness over the fact that I was able this morning to sign the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Vanuatu will ratify the Convention upon my return there.

In Vanuatu child development is given top priority by the Government in its national development plans, in particular in the area of education and health, which account for more than 50 per cent of the Government's recurrent budget. May I also inform the Summit that for the first time this year Vanuatu children have organized themselves and declared a national children's day to be celebrated each year in Vanuatu as a step in the direction that they would themselves like to try to be involved, in the way that they would like to see the development of children in Vanuatu.

Many have said that education is very important in the enhancement of the development of children. Education has to be mental and spiritual, and I can say that in Vanuatu we have been able to do that over the last 10 years, but we still face problems. We have been able to provide the means of employment for people who have reached the level of secondary and university education, but we have not been able to provide for the majority of children with primary school education who find themselves unemployed and almost useless in their own society.

In Vanuatu the Government has provided for free primary education for all children. About 85 per cent of children aged 6 to 12 enrol in primary schools. Many have also expressed the fact that family stability and unity is very important, particularly for enhancing child development. In Vanuatu, the family—particularly the extended family—under our social system and traditional values, is very important in this respect. Our efforts to provide a better future for our children depend on the improvement of our national economy. In this respect, special attention should be given to the least developed countries.

In conclusion, may I add, on behalf of the South Pacific Forum, that we in the South Pacific would welcome the convening by UNICEF of a meeting in our region so that follow-up actions could be undertaken to enhance the development of children in our region.

Discussion Session IV:

IMPLEMENTATION AND FOLLOW-UP

Introductory Statement by the President of the REPUBLIC OF SENEGAL, His Excellency Mr. Abdou Diouf

(interpretation from French)

We have come together here in this symbolic place in order to take up, together, the challenges which face us all and which we have turned into goals to be achieved. These goals are familiar to you, being contained in the Declaration and Plan of Action prepared by the Summit Planning Committee. What we must do is ensure that after this gathering, the implementation of the Declaration and the Plan of Action will be pursued with a zeal in keeping with the generosity of the positions we have adopted, so that those positions are followed by specific deeds. This requires ways and means to be found and follow-up and assessment systems to be set up.

I think we can find the means if we take the path of greater international solidarity, which should be reflected in an optimal reallocation of resources for financing development. In this context, the principal world powers, which have now turned resolutely in the direction of disarmament—a trend which I hope will continue, in spite of what is now going on—might devote some of the resources freed as a result to financing the Plan of Action.

However, there is nothing to indicate that the developing countries will be able to get back on track for healthy and lasting growth unless the debt crisis, which is still seriously handicapping their development, is resolved. In this regard, the main creditors of the developing countries could be called upon to reconsider their approach to settling this crisis, which cannot be solved simply by debt rescheduling and consolidation. Market measures of that kind, even if they do allow the exchequers of the countries concerned a breathing space, still provided no real budget savings capable of financing development and therefore of financing our programmes for children.

For this reason, it might now be time to implement more radical measures, such as: cancelling all or some of the bilateral debt, but with a clause tying the resources which would have gone towards the debt to financing programmes of activities to benefit children. This could be done, since some creditor countries have already cancelled debts; and setting up systems to follow up and assess the implementation of the Declaration and the Plan of Action, which could be done on various levels: at the international level, first of all, by UNICEF and by a follow-up committee which we could set up, along the lines of the Planning Committee we constituted. After that, the continental and regional levels would be overseen by existing, appropriate bodies and by non-governmental organizations; then, on the national level, by the national committees set up to prepare for the Summit.

The national committees, indeed, are vitally important in mobilizing societies behind the Convention and the Summit Plan of Action; structures of this kind are the best frameworks within which to carry out regular assessments of how well the objectives set out in the Plan of Action are being achieved and take any additional steps which may be necessary. They ought also to make it possible to check whether national law in their countries is in conformity with the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and to check whether the Convention, a legal instrument, is being effectively applied.

This is the direction I think we ought to take if we want the generous positions we came to in our meetings to be followed up by action which will not disappoint the hopes we have raised.

Introductory Statement by the Prime Minister of ITALY, His Excellency Dr. Giulio Andreotti

(interpretation from French)

Martin Luther King, in his sermon of his last Christmas, reminded us that as long as we speak about peace as a remote objective, it will never be attained. Peace, he stated, will be achieved only when each person feels it as a commitment and a personal undertaking, as a moral imperative to which one has to align oneself and one's activities. Although it is true that the only way to foresee the future is to prepare for it, we wish to confirm our moral commitment and act in a timely way to assure a future of genuine peace and well-being for future generations. It is in this spirit that I recall the words of this man of peace.

There is a new solidarity today which has given life to a united and determined world coalition such as has never existed before. It is in this same spirit of universal co-operation that we must act against this silent enemy, which is called under-development, including democratic under-development, while eliminating our age-old selfishness.

We are aware that we must steadfastly confront and resolve the knots of interdependence between the North and the South, while easing the obvious concern that the recovery of democracy in Eastern Europe will involve the abandonment of the South.

Pope John Paul II in his encyclical *Sollicitudo rei socialis* reminds us that interdependence between peoples is not a hypothesis or a discretionary option. It is a given, and it is on the basis of this condition that in our common efforts we must not set ourselves impossible goals or yield to Utopia, even if we must acknowledge that it drives us forward and that today's history is to some extent yesterday's Utopia. We know with certainty that the consequences of the crisis will once again afflict the poorest populations and their children, whose lives are endangered in the attempt to pay their fathers' debt. We no longer have time for old-fashioned rhetoric. We must give substance to the need to eliminate between now and the end of the century the principal cause of the stark division between North and South. We must equip the institutions governing the processes of economic adjustment with genuine sensitivity to the social aspects, thus avoiding rigid and purely macroeconomic cures, so that the primacy of the development of man, of whom the child is a privileged indicator, will prevail over the primacy of the economy and profit.

It is time to combine with an understanding of the diagnosis—which has long been known—an operational understanding of the remedies. I consider that the debt of the developing countries to bilateral and multilateral agencies must be virtually cancelled out by transforming it into long-term loans at minimum interest rates, payable in local currencies, so that they may be turned into new investments for economic development and the protection of the environment.

We can thus contribute, among other things, to improving the basic social and health structures and to intensifying programmes of vaccination, drinking water, improved nutrition and training.

The United Nations today is capable of assuring the role of guarantor of a new complex mechanism and of transforming debt into human solidarity.

The communities and Governments of the South must play the role of true protagonists in the construction of a common future. One must forcefully uphold the democratic principle of open participation by local communities, going even so far as imposing such participation as a condition to obtain financing.

There cannot be a more appropriate occasion to affirm that the possibility of ending the arms race is a genuine historic opportunity, not only because the arms race is dangerous and immoral, but because ending it would make it possible to utilize enormous resources to far more noble ends—a more equitable distribution of wealth and genuine social justice world-wide.

New ways of ensuring the future of our children have not been indicated. But we all know that there are methods and instruments at our disposal. All that is required is to have the confidence to want to make use of them and to know how to make use of them.

I should like to end my statement by quoting a young, nine-year-old girl from a village in the south of Italy. At the funeral of a friend of hers who had been assassinated by those who would make—but they will not succeed—Italy under-developed as a result of criminality, she said:

> "Leave us a world where mankind can enjoy life, freedom, security within the family, the certainty of duties and rights, and the happiness of living with others."

We have the possibility of seeing the hopes of that young girl become reality with the solemn Declaration and the Plan of Action we shall adopt today.

It is our duty to take up this challenge.

Commentary by the President of the REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE, His Excellency Cde. Robert G. Mugabe

As I view this forum and its principal objective, I think we are gathered here to try and acquire a new commitment to the welfare of the child. It is not that we have not been attending to the needs of the child; it is rather that what we have been doing has not been enough. I want to believe, therefore, that after this conference we shall have a new commitment, a new level of consciousness and a new dedication to the needs of the child. But the child that we have in mind, as we have already been told, is one whose mind is inhibited by various factors and hence ill-educated or not educated at all in some cases, and whose body is also afflicted by various diseases and who needs programmes of action. The programmes of action that from now on we will be called upon to implement should be those that will address the problem as we see it from the point of view of our nations.

This problem is best known when we have statistics, when we have a mechanism for collecting and analysing statistics and are able therefore to bring the nature and the extent of the problem to the attention of those in Government.

Hence, the nations—our nations—should address the problem, but our nations have limited resources, and where the limitation of resources exists we naturally expect that those countries that are more developed than ours should be able to come in with complementary or supplementary resources in the various areas. But apart from that, there are areas where even if we jointly apply our resources there is very little that can be done unless the environment is propitious. I am thinking now of the environment in terms of peace and security. In southern Africa we have such an environment that makes it difficult for us, especially Mozambique and Angola, to address the question of the welfare of the child.

You have terrorism going on, and in some cases this terrorism is aided and abetted by forces from within the international field. This terrorism has created refugees and a welfare problem of great magnitude, and we are called upon there not only to use our own resources but to appeal to the world to come to our rescue. But we are also called upon to use the various forms of pressure that can remove the causes of the situation as we find it.

In other words, if *apartheid* is removed, then necessarily there will also be a better condition for the child and a better environment in which we, using our national policies, can improve the lot of our children. So I would want us to go away with the view that our national and international policies must converge so that the welfare of the child can best be taken account of.

Commentary by the Prime Minister of TUNISIA, His Excellency Dr. Hamed Karoui

(interpretation from Arabic)

It is a great honour for me and for other Arab countries to take part in this World Summit for Children. First of all, I would like to convey to the United Nations, and in particular to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), my deep gratitude for this great initiative, the first of its kind in history. In devoting this Summit to the world's children, we are actually showing concern for the future of humanity as a whole.

The countries of our region have always been interested in the fate of children, and this continues to be the case. Our countries have always devoted a great deal of attention to children, from the standpoint of their health, education, upbringing and living conditions. This is what is set forth in the Arab Charter on the Rights of the Child, adopted by the Arab States in 1983.

The unremitting efforts in the area of child welfare in the Arab world have succeeded in achieving a number of objectives. In the area of health care, we have been able to realize the highest reduction in child mortality: approximately 50 per cent over the decade of the 1980s. Many Arab States have far exceeded the international immunization targets. Other significant achievements have been made in such areas as the environment and the provision of drinking water.

With regard to education, we have been able to raise school attendance to 80 per cent among the children of some Arab countries. Increasing attention has been paid to pre-school training, day care and family centres. Special care is provided in the case of deprived families and those who cannot take care of their children, especially in cases of natural disasters, wars or earthquakes.

In their endeavour to improve the quality of life for children, the developing world, including the Arab countries, faces certain challenges which can be dealt with only through a concerted effort to usher in a new economic order that would bridge the enormous gap between the industrial countries and the developing countries.

While we meet here at the highest level, with a view to answering a better future for children, the Arab children in the Arab occupied territories in general, and the Palestinian children in particular, live in limbo. Their plight is so tragic that in all conscience we should not keep silent *vis à vis* Israel's practices.

It is necessary for the family of nations to redouble its efforts to put an end to this aggression and bring peace and justice to the region. At the same time, the international community is called upon to make a concerted effort to put a stop to racist oppression in South Africa.

On this occasion, I should like to reaffirm our commitment to the rights of the child and our determination to face up to all the challenges which are involved in the drive to enable children throughout the world to lead a decent and happy life. We hope that we will come to a meeting of the minds on the occasion of this historic Summit so that children may be placed at the forefront of our scale of priorities. A just peace for all nations is a basic prerequisite for a prosperous future for our children and mankind as a whole.

Commentary by the President of the REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES, His Excellency Mr. Maumoon Abdul Gayoom

Mr. President, allow me first of all to fulfill a promise I have made to the children of my country. Two months ago a message was passed on to me through the tiny hands of thousands of children of the Maldives. It is at the request of these children that I convey their message to this esteemed gathering. The message, ladies and gentlemen, is a plea for international understanding and co-operation in the face of the serious threat posed by rising sea levels to the very existence of our low-lying and environmentally fragile nation, the coral islands these children will inherit.

That this serious message was passed on to me at a time of nation-wide celebrations to mark the twenty-fifth year of independence is testimony to the deep concern in the mind of our children about their future. I have no doubt that the outcome of this Summit and our firm determination to give every child a better future will contribute to the reduction of such fears and generate feelings of optimism and hope among all our children about their future. In the name of our children, I thank the initiators of the World Summit for Children, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and all those involved in this noble endeavour.

From the new vision that is reflected in the Declaration and the Plan of Action, we must now move towards new and firm commitments to ensure the effective implementation of the new vision. To make the new vision a reality, each country will need to conduct a diagnostic analysis of the present status of its children, establish a time-bound target for meeting the basic needs of children, and define specific implementation strategies to attain them.

I am happy to recall that the Conference on South Asian Children, held in New Delhi in 1986, and the second Summit of the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC), held in Bangalore the same year, generated substantial support for children at the regional and national levels. While significant achievements have resulted from these initiatives, much more remains to be done.

In the Maldives, as in other SAARC member countries, the resources available are far from adequate to fulfill the task at hand. This means that we shall need to generate additional national and external resources. Of crucial importance, however, is the need to mobilize an even more powerful resource for child development: the awareness, commitment and energy of all concerned.

I call upon religious leaders, non-governmental organizations, community leaders and businesses to play a more effective role in mobilizing these important and vital resources.

Each country should create a suitable framework for monitoring its own progress and tracing improvement from the present situation through intermediate targets to the ultimate goal. I should like to suggest that preliminary efforts with regard to the implementation of the Plan of Action be reviewed at an appropriate gathering scheduled for the end of 1991. At the forthcoming summit meeting of SAARC, to be held in the Maldives in November of this year, I shall propose that, beginning in 1991, the Heads of State or Government of SAARC member nations review at their annual meeting their countries' progress in the implementation of the decisions taken at this Summit.

In our efforts to make the new vision a reality we must avail ourselves of the new mood of international co-operation and global action, the like of which has never been witnessed on so universal a scale before. There is now considerable scope in the developed and developing world to allocate more funds for the real war, the war on human poverty and deprivation, in which children should receive the highest priority, for it is children who should have first call on society's capacities.

In conclusion, may I say that the final judges of our efforts will be the children themselves. When every child has a family that gives him love and care, a school to go to, healthy food that allows for normal growth, a society that protects him from disease, mistreatment and abuse, and a clean and safe environment, then we as leaders, policy-makers and caring people will have fulfilled at least part of our dream.

Commentary by the Prime Minister of NORWAY, His Excellency Mr. Jan P. Syse

We all know that the best eloquence is the one that gets things done. We also know that the importance of this Summit can be measured only by our deeds.

Most of us in this assembly have children. We would all go the extra mile for them, to use a Biblical expression. If my two children starved or were abused, nothing could stand in my way to helping them, and I am sure that all the mothers and fathers in this assembly feel exactly the same way. What we must learn is to lift our eyes from the particular to the general, because the general is nothing more than the sum of the particulars. The children we are talking about today are not abstract entities. They are living human beings. And they need us, just as our own children need us.

Children face problems all over the world. But the overwhelming challenge is the catastrophic situation in many developing countries. A mobilization of resources from the rich countries is urgently required. We do not need Robin Hood to teach us that the rich must give. But the developing countries must assume their responsibilities. They must accelerate reforms. They must put the rights of the individual at the centre to release the potential of their human resources.

Children are always among the most vulnerable. Our aid must be restructured to give them protection and opportunities. If more than 100 jumbo jets filled with children crashed every day, there would be an outrage. But that is the number of children who are dying every day of starvation and disease.

Earlier today we heard of the need to establish the right instruments to monitor the implementation of our Plan of Action. I agree. In Norway we have established a special institution for securing the interests of children. He is called the Ombudsman, or Commissioner, for Children. He acts as a watchdog to bring about progress, and his work has shown us that child suffering and abuse are certainly not reserved for the developing world. Watchdogs such as our Commissioner are badly needed everywhere.

Today more than 10 per cent of Norwegian aid is spent on health, mother and child care and family planning. I urge donor countries to structure their aid to meeting the commitments of this Summit. Norway is the largest *per capita* contributor to UNICEF and, in spite of our small size, the fourth largest contributor in absolute terms. We are proud of that fact. But this is not a race we would like to win: it is a race that we must all win.

The real work will start when the Summit is over and the world leaders return back home. I am tempted to say: Let us go home. Or—more to the point—let us go to work.

Statement by the Prime Minister of IRELAND, His Excellency Mr. Charles J. Haughey

Joint Presidents and dear colleagues, this year's report of UNICEF states that in the 1980s a beginning has been made in eradicating preventable killer diseases affecting children. We have seen how—particularly in the poorest countries—the idea of prevention of disease can take hold and thereby save or at least transform the lives of millions.

However, today more than 20 million children suffer from severe malnutrition, and 150 million are underweight. For hundreds of millions of other children inadequate basic health, education and other social services severely constrain prospects for a worthwhile and satisfying life.

The challenges facing the world community to alleviate this situation are therefore immense. The implementation of the objectives and priorities of the World Declaration and Plan of Action will be crucial in achieving success.

In this regard we must in particular commit ourselves as political leaders to ensuring that the ideals of the Convention on the Rights of the Child become a reality which actually improves the daily life of children everywhere. I particularly welcome the emphasis in the Convention on the need to provide for children's development within a secure family setting. It is within the family that cultural identity is established and that moral, intellectual and social development is fostered.

I also welcome the Convention's stress on the need for basic education in all its aspects. Basic education provides a crucial foundation for a life of dignity and self-reliance for every individual in society. It is also required to enable the full realization of the human potential.

The developed countries have a special responsibility in bringing about an international political and economic environment that is just, secure and humane. Such an environment is required to advance the well-being of all the world's children. However, for the developing countries, especially the least developed ones, it is vital to support their development efforts. The success of these efforts, which must be supported by the developed world, offers the best chance for improving the situation of the hundreds of millions of children who even today live in poverty and destitution.

I congratulate our Co-Presidents, the Secretary-General, UNICEF and its Director General on the brilliantly successful organization of this historic Summit, and I pledge Ireland's full support for the Convention, the Declaration and the Plan of Action.

Statement by the President of the REPUBLIC OF GUINEA-BISSAU, His Excellency General João Bernardo Vieira

(delivered in Portuguese; interpretation from French text furnished by Guinea-Bissau)

This assembly is certainly a historic event, but history will recall less the impressive number and high status of the official representatives at the World Summit for Children than their concrete actions. I believe that it is important for us to create, in our respective countries, appropriate machinery to enable us to attain our goals.

Our Plan of Action is undoubtedly ambitious, but given the will on the part of Governments, it can be achieved. I have certainly perceived such a determination in all the statements I have heard. I should like, however, to emphasize the need for proper co-ordination of our efforts through active co-operation on behalf of our noble cause, children, who are the only true wealth of humanity.

From the very beginning Guinea-Bissau supported the idea of convening the World Summit for Children. I should like to take this opportunity to congratulate UNICEF, the initiator of the Summit, which has aroused well-justified hopes among our people.

My country prepared and organized, in co-operation with UNICEF, one national and three regional conferences involving thousands of participants throughout the country. Questions relating to malnutrition received special attention. Maternal health, environment and education were also considered. At the end of its work, the conference adopted a document entitled "Declaration of Bissau". The Declaration analysed the state of children in Guinea-Bissau and made appropriate recommendations on all the specific themes to which I have referred. It also proposed the adoption at the international level of a set of measures up to the year 2000, as well as priority measures to be carried out in the poorest countries.

We feel that the document is very important. It is the fruit of the work of national experts and many others, including children. There is no doubt that it will be instrumental in leading to an appropriate strategy that will enable us to resolve the problems of children. The recommendations contained in the Declaration will be put into effect in the new local administrative structures of my country, in co-ordination with the representatives of the United Nations specialized agencies and with representatives of national and foreign agencies.

Children are the pearl of our struggle and the focus of our efforts for development and well-being for all.

Statement by the Prime Minister of the REPUBLIC OF POLAND, His Excellency Mr. Tadeusz Mazowiecki

(interpretation from French)

The Convention on the Rights of Children, of which Poland was one of the initiators, is an essential component of the international legal machinery in the sphere of human rights. It is precisely on behalf of children that we have been struggling and are continuing to struggle against poverty, violence and mendacity in the various countries of the world.

In my country, such a statement is not mere rhetoric—noble, certainly, but with no basis in reality. My country, Poland, experienced dreadful destruction during the Second World War. For several decades it then endured a type of power imposed by force—a source of suffering for the entire nation. But the children obviously suffered even more than the adults from the effects of totalitarianism.

For the past year, Poland and the other countries of East-Central Europe have embarked upon the path of democracy and the rule of law. That is not, obviously, sufficient to assure happy lives for our children, but it is a prerequisite if the structural sources of their misfortunes are to be eliminated. Democracy and liberty are necessary conditions for confidence, not just among adults but between adults and children.

Our unprecedented meeting is evidence of the importance we all attach to the Convention. One essential task remains—to incorporate the provisions of the Convention into the domestic laws of our countries, and particularly to ensure that they are complied with. That is a challenge commensurate with our hopes for a better world.

Statement by the Amir of the STATE OF KUWAIT, His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah

(interpretation from Arabic)

After our objective and concerned discussion of the issues pertaining to children in the World Summit, which we believe to be the beginning of wide-ranging governmental and popular action on behalf of the children of the world, I should like to express our appreciation for the convening of such a Summit in this venue, a true international forum. By calling for such a Summit, international co-operation between the third world and the developed countries becomes clear and vivid. That indeed is the character of the coming era. It is international co-operation for peace, freedom, and the right of peoples to self-determination.

The question of child care is virtually synonymous with caring for family and society. Children are society's real assets and its hope for the future. If we are to seek a world with greater magnanimity, tolerance and growth, we must emphasize children's importance and rights. They are part and parcel of human rights.

To children in many parts of the world, Kuwait has offered what it could in various areas by helping world organizations concerned for international child care financially, medically and educationally. Kuwait has also fostered and hosted the Kuwaiti Society for the Advancement of Arab Children, which is primarily concerned with Arab children. Our perception of children and childhood is one of interest in humanity and the fulfillment of its needs in the areas of mental health and social care. Our common human values call for the utmost attention to be paid to children, family relations and parenthood, just as our spiritual values call for living in peace, safety and assistance to others whenever possible. That is indeed the teaching of all religions.

As we meet today to discuss the case of children world-wide, which is an issue that concerns us all, I should like to remind you and the entire world that our children, the children of Kuwait, are being subjected to agony and hardship. Their mothers are being tormented and violated. The entire society of Kuwait is being made homeless and displaced. The children of Kuwait enjoyed great attention, and we were keen to provide the best attention to them, believing as we do that they are the assets and resources of the future.

Statement by the Secretary of State of the HOLY SEE, His Eminence Agostino Cardinal Casaroli

(interpretation from French)

It is a great honour for me to convey the greetings and best wishes of His Holiness Pope John Paul II to the distinguished Heads of State and Government who are participating in the World Summit for Children.

On this occasion, the Holy See would like to solemnly restate its continuing commitment to work for the benefit of those who have so rightly been called the "Springtime of Life".

Children bring to us the benefit of their love, of their trust, of their acceptance of our attempts to respond to their needs as truly human persons whose well-being brings with it the promise of the well-being of society as a whole.

Although with some reservations stemming from serious concerns of an ethical nature which it has always honestly made present, the Holy See's prompt accession to the International Convention on the Rights of the Child shows the Church's firm resolve to continue its two-thousand-year history of unstinting efforts and to collaborate with the whole of mankind—independently of differences in race, culture, faith or conviction—for the true and complete welfare of all the children of the world. In each child the Church, in effect, sees the dignity of a child of God, made in his own image and likeness, endowed from the beginning of his or her existence, already in the mother's womb, with innate and inalienable rights.

In various quarters concern has been expressed about the large increase of population in some parts of the world, while in other regions a considerable fall in the number of births points to a continuing aging of the population, with a growing lack of creative energies and a foreseeable decline of ancient, noble civilizations.

In the face of one and the other of these situations, which need to be considered in a broad and serious global and historical vision, the Holy See reaffirms its absolute conviction that the very grave problems can be solved only on the basis of clear and solid moral principles. These principles, it is convinced, are valid both for those responsible for national and international life, as well as for individual families, whose role and freedom must be acknowledged and respected, in order to avoid the danger of open or veiled intrusions of the State which might threaten the freedom or moral character of peoples.

Much has been done on behalf of the child. But the Holy See hopes and fervently wishes that all Governments and the appropriate international organizations—especially UNICEF—as well as religious agencies and voluntary bodies, will work with renewed commitment to promote programmes aimed at offsetting infant mortality and improving the life prospects of children and mothers around the world, particularly where needs are greatest.

May God bless all the children of the world! May he give us hearts large enough to embrace children everywhere, and hands strong enough to protect them and to help them!

Statement by the President of EL SALVADOR, His Excellency Lic. Alfredo Félix Cristiani-Burkard

(interpretation from Spanish)

When we were invited to take part in this meeting, we accepted enthusiastically, because we felt it could adopt important agreements to resolve or at least to alleviate, in the short term, the serious problems affecting our children, which prevent them from developing and, at times, even from living—although they have a right to live.

Today, we see with great satisfaction that there is an awareness of, and a general interest in overcoming, these problems. These have been embodied in a Declaration and Plan of Action, which we enthusiastically support.

In the course of the day, we have heard about the many problems which exist with regard to children all over the world, and our country is not immune to many of them. We have internal conflict, where we see children being mutilated by mines; very, very young children with guns in their hands; and, of course, the destruction which war entails.

Ours is a small country, and it has a high population density. And, of course, poverty exists in our country; indeed, we are among the poorest countries in Latin America. Nevertheless, in El Salvador we have been able to do something. With the assistance of UNICEF, we have been able to inoculate more than 80 per cent of the children, and I take this opportunity to thank UNICEF and the United Nations for their solidarity with Salvadoran children. The Government has also undertaken to solve all problems of the family, including those of children, and, for the first time in El Salvador, we now have a family agency which works under the presidency of the Republic.

The problems of children cannot wait. They call for immediate action. We have heard here in this forum that the solutions are known. They are known to all of us, and we believe that with the two essential ingredients—the political will of each one of us and international solidarity—we will be able to do a great deal. In moral and legal terms, we have the obligation to act promptly, and that is why we will support and we will applaud anything done to implement and follow up the results of this Summit.

Statement by the Prime Minister of SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS, His Excellency The Hon. Dr. Kennedy A. Simmonds

Today's proceedings have indicated that there is a vast variety of issues and perspectives for the international development of children. However, if we are successfully to implement actions and do the things that need to be done, then these perspectives must be reduced to the national level and, even further, be implemented at the community level in each of our countries. In order to do that, I believe it is essential for us to mobilize public support and participation, by clear practical demonstration of our own political will and leadership.

Since the independence of Saint Kitts and Nevis in 1983, I have led my Cabinet on each anniversary in a sponsored walkathon to raise funds to support the Children's Home and the disabled. Each of us can determine how to demonstrate that personal and political commitment in our own way.

It is clear that the health of our children is the key to their development, and to ensure that development, we must continue our programmes of immunization, family planning and pre-natal care. But we must also address the psychological health of our children, which includes the provision of adequate recreation facilities, counselling, and career guidance.

I support the plea made earlier by my colleague the Prime Minister of Dominica for greater assistance in the provision of housing, so that an environment conducive to development may be created.

The implementation programme must address the nutrition of our children. A school-meals programme was introduced in my country, and I was greatly concerned by the fact that there appeared to be very little interest in assisting us to implement it.

Obviously, economic development and the development of our infrastructure are key factors in the general economic climate in which our children grow up. However, it is not possible to evaluate everything on the basis of the rate of economic return; there must be greater sensitivity to the issues of social development, including the provision of school meals, early-childhood education, and the provision of day-care facilities—a necessity as we face the reality of working mothers in today's society.

Better co-ordination between governmental organizations and non-governmental organizations is an issue of extreme relevance in some countries, where international organizations seem reluctant to support agencies and where, therefore, Governments carry great responsibility for implementing programmes.

I should like to make a specific proposal: that UNICEF be mandated to establish, with the help of various Governments, a series of regional workshops, which would bring together the governmental organizations and non-governmental organizations involved in the provision of development assistance for children. These workshops would develop specific plans and programmes on the ground, and the personnel would be assisted to implement them. It would be possible to derive from that a model for each type of society. For example, I should be prepared to make my country available as the location for a workshop that would address these issues as they relate to developing island countries. A country in southern Africa could be selected to do likewise for sub-Saharan Africa.

Finally, we should intensify international efforts against drug trafficking and organize a conference similar to this one, possibly in two years' time, to evaluate our performance following this event.

Statement by the President of PANAMA, His Excellency Lic. Guillermo Endara Galimany

(interpretation from Spanish)

I have a written statement for this occasion, but I must admit that previous speakers have addressed all the aspects we find here. This has been done very clearly and cogently by people who are much better at this than I am. Hence, with regard above all to the theme "Implementation and follow-up", I shall refer to those words that have had major impact, at least in the case of my own delegation.

When the distinguished President of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, Mr. Havel, referred to the rights of children under a dictatorship, I was moved deep in my soul. The statement by the Prime Minister of Poland that under a dictatorship, children and young people suffer more than grown-ups was also a major truth.

This major task was initiated by, and has been undertaken with great assistance from, the Group of Seven. For that, I thank them. It would be a good idea to consider President Havel's proposal that there be added to the Convention on the Rights of the Child a clause giving special protection and rights to children living under dictatorial régimes.

Panama has come out of a dictatorship, and I know that the youth of my country do not want another one—indeed, that they would not live under another dictatorship. But we knew, when we were emerging from such a régime, that we had to fight for freedom and democracy throughout the world. We must fight against dictatorships all over the world because we are all interdependent. That is why I ask the Secretary-General to distribute to all countries participating in this Summit a copy of President Havel's excellent proposal for amendment of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Statement by the Chairman of the National Salvation Revolution Command Council of the REPUBLIC OF THE SUDAN, His Excellency Lt. Gen. Omer Hassan Ahmed El Bashir

(interpretation from Arabic)

It augurs well for our work that this conference coincides with the anniversary of the birth of the prophet Mohammed. May peace be upon him whose message made the love and protection of children part and parcel of the religion of Islam.

I want to talk about the children who live in difficult circumstances, of whom the children of Sudan are an example. The starting point of Sudan's efforts to safeguard the rights of children in general and those in difficult circumstances in particular is our political commitment to their sacred right to life, protection and development. We are meeting this commitment by giving children priority in all our efforts and in all circumstances. Sudan was one of the first countries to ratify the charter on the rights of the Arab child. We have ratified also the International Convention on the Rights of the Child. We have undertaken proper scientific preparation for implementation of that Convention by means of legislation, the use of resources, the provision of services, and national strategy towards meeting world targets in the areas of health, pure drinking water, basic education, the provision of the basic needs of mother and child and the establishment of a national council for the welfare of children.

Sudan's achievements in the two major areas of child protection clearly demonstrate the results that may be achieved through political commitment, sound planning and international management and co-operation. Those two areas are: first, Sudan's unprecedented initiative, known as "Lifeline Operation", which has been undertaken in the context of international co-operation under the auspices of the United Nations and, in its first phase, under the capable supervision of the Executive Director of UNICEF. The aim has been the provision of food and medication to civilians in zones of military operation in the South, particularly children and mothers, regardless of security considerations as we give the protection of children the highest priority over any other consideration.

Second, the comprehensive campaign of immunization, which I have led personally in line with the decision by the Revolutionary Council. I have immunized the first child in the capital and in a number of provinces. Thanks to this campaign, the rate of immunization has been increased from 30 per cent in 1985 to more than 50 per cent at the end of 1989. We are still striving to meet the world objective by the end of this year.

On the occasion of the convening of this Conference and as a result of our concern for the protection of Sudanese children, I hereby declare a period of tranquillity until the end of this year so that all children can be immunized. If some of the rebels respond positively to our call, we would be prepared to declare a permanent cease-fire and

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continue to negotiate in search of peace. We look forward to more responsible international co-operation that would enable us to implement our programmes dedicated to children.

At a time when we join hands and undertake to protect children, I may be permitted to ask: and who will protect the stone-throwing children whose voice is stifled in the occupied Palestinian territories? We call for an international political commitment in accordance with the statements in the Convention, in the Declaration and in the Plan of Action in order to bring happiness to the children of the world and safeguard their future.

Thank you.

Statement by the Prime Minister of the REPUBLIC OF ZAIRE, His Excellency Mr. Lunda Bululu

(interpretation from French)

In the field of the protection of children, my country has worked for many years to set up an institutional framework to provide children with legal, health and educational protection. Legally speaking, our protection of children is based on a number of legal instruments which, in many respects, provide for the concerns expressed in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which Zaire ratified on 22 August last. As regards the family, all laws are based on a fundamental political principle that each child must have a father. Every child, whether born in or out of wedlock, has the right to equal protection by society. From the point of view of health, a sectoral strategy has been set up. There are a number of projects which deal specifically with the health of children. These include an expanded programme of vaccination, national centres for nutrition, adequate birth services and the rural and urban health centres, with their eight components. From the educational point of view, my Government has sought to establish free primary and secondary education.

Since 28 April 1990, Zaire has resolutely embarked upon the course of the democratization of its institutions. A new political climate, we are confident, will establish conditions capable of guaranteeing the full flourishing of the child, thanks to the equality of opportunity provided for them. We are quite sure that our efforts to provide children with harmonious development of their capabilities are not adequate. That is why we very much hope that this Summit will help set up new political strategies to provide children with a radiant future as we approach the year 2000.

Statement by the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the BYELORUSSIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC, His Excellency Mr. Nikolai Ivanovich Dementei

(interpretation from Russian)

All of us who have gathered here are united by our desire to give the children of the world a better future. This lofty goal is promoted by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted last year, which the Byelorussian SSR has ratified, as well as by the draft Universal Declaration for Children and the Plan of Action to implement it, drawn up just before this meeting, which are also designed to promote that aim. We believe the commitment contained in the draft Declaration to ameliorate the plight of millions of children who live under especially difficult circumstances, and to meet the needs of the victims of man-made disasters to be of special importance. I see this as further evidence of the concern shown for the children of Byelorussia, the Ukraine and the Russian Republic who suffered as a result of the Chernobyl accident. As a result of that accident, radioactive substances were expelled into the atmosphere to an extent several times greater than was the case with the explosion of the atomic bomb over Hiroshima. Seventy per cent of those radioactive substances fell over our long-suffering land. The Parliament of the Republic proclaimed the entire territory of the Republic an ecological-disaster zone. Among the urgent purposes and tasks of our programme to eliminate the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster, the protection of the health and well-being of all people and particularly children has first place. Our Supreme Soviet recently adopted a Declaration on the State Sovereignty of the Byelorussian SSR, which emphasized this very point.

The magnitude of the disaster that struck our people and the fraternal peoples of the Ukraine and Russia was so enormous and unprecedented that co-ordinated international action was needed to help, particularly within the framework of the United Nations. In this connection, we place great hope in the decisions that the General Assembly is about to take at its forty-fifth session.

I wish, on behalf of thousands of mothers and fathers, to thank all who have offered their help. I convey my thanks to all of you. I thank you, and I bow to you.

Statement by the Prime Minister of SAINT LUCIA, His Excellency The Hon. John G.M. Compton

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Let me congratulate you and the other initiators of this Summit for bringing us together in what is the parliament of the world.

It is a good thing for us to meet here because just across the street you can see the words written in a tablet of stone that "they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks". Perhaps at this meeting we should update that a little bit and speak about converting our bombs into books and our spy satellites into lecture rooms, because, as men have now eaten from the tree of knowledge, we have available to us an awesome array of instruments which can abolish from the face of this Earth man's ancient enemies, ignorance, poverty, hunger and disease, which very often are the root causes of war, and the children are the greatest victims.

If we of the developing world are to catch up and give our children an opportunity in this world, we have to educate them. Let me just quote from an ancient Chinese proverb, which says, "If you are to plan for one year, you plant rice; if you are planning for five years, you plant trees; if you are planning for a generation and for the future, you educate your children".

I believe that is the task before us today, and that is what I invite this historic assembly to endorse.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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CLOSING SESSION

Statement by the President of the REPUBLIC OF MALI, His Excellency General Moussa Traoré,
Co-President of the World Summit for Children

(interpretation from French)

We have had a very rich debate, which has enabled us to focus on the whole range of problems confronting children throughout the world. Questions involving the survival, protection and development of children have been considered.

We have all remembered that we have all been children ourselves. Today we are not only fathers and mothers but also, and above all, the leaders of this planet. In that capacity we bear a dual and heavy responsibility: on the one hand, for meeting the aspirations of our peoples and, on the other hand, for building the future.

The child is at the centre of those two objectives and of the primary concerns of any family and any society. A Malian song goes: "Children are not merchandise. They cannot be bought. They are a gift of God".

We cannot build a future without concerning ourselves with children and meeting their aspirations. What do children want? First of all, they want love, as well as peace and security, without which nothing can be done. Then they want their rights to be preserved—first and foremost the right to food, to health, to education, to housing and, above all, hope. Lastly, they want justice, equity and a healthy environment in which they can fully develop.

The Declaration and the Plan of Action, which are the outcome of a far-reaching and world-wide consensus, can meet those expectations. All that is needed is for the political will that has made possible the holding of this unprecedented Summit to take concrete form also in following up and, above all, implementing the Declaration and the Plan of Action.

Our World Summit for Children has already aroused great hope among children and among all people of good will who work for children and for mothers—and mothers must necessarily be involved in anything done for the benefit of children.

The non-governmental organizations of the whole world have asked me to convey to those assembled here the message that they are available to work in following up the Summit and implementing the Plan of Action, in close co-operation with Governments and international organizations.

We must all seize this unique opportunity to advance the peace and happiness of mankind by translating into concrete actions the political will that has been so evident during this Summit.

The closing decade of this century must be the decade of children so that the twenty-first century can be the century of peace, prosperity and well-being to which mankind aspires.

Statement by the Prime Minister of SWEDEN, His Excellency Mr. Ingvar Carlsson,

to Introduce the Draft Declaration and Plan of Action

Mr. President, Mr. Secretary-General, Heads of State and Government, ladies and gentlemen, this Summit has already become a historic event. Never before have so many Heads of State and Government come together for one single meeting. But also—never before has such an important topic been the subject of a world summit: a better future for all children. So we are making history today.

On behalf of all the participants I want to thank you, Prime Minister Mulroney, and you, President Traoré, for the excellent way in which you have presided over us. You have been firm but friendly.

The real importance of this meeting will be measured by the results which emanate from it. So the question is: What happens next?

We have in front of us a draft Declaration and a draft Plan of Action, which have been prepared to answer that question.

The draft Declaration presents a challenge and an opportunity. It deals with the tasks we face and also presents a commitment to act.

To build a better future for the world's children touches upon all aspects of human activities. During the important early years, human beings are dependent on, and need, a supportive and enabling environment. In that period, we grow and gain strength—if we get enough food and clean drinking water; if we are protected from illnesses, abuses and violence; if we are sheltered from heat, cold and rain. In this period we form our personalities; we develop our life skills; our minds mature as we are cared for, loved, encouraged, stimulated and educated.

This period is childhood. It is the unique part of a person's life when that person's future is formed.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child emphasizes respect for each child's need for protection, provision and participation. It urges us to safeguard the best interests of the child, in good times as well as in bad. This requires political decisions. It requires priorities for children.

We live in a year of great changes in world politics. Confrontation and rearmament are replaced by dialogue and disarmament. Never has there been a better time for shifting resources from engines of war and destruction towards that human development that has its roots in children.

The draft Declaration lists the tasks in front of us and suggests a ten-point commitment. In the Plan of Action, a very precise agenda has been spelled out.

The text deals with health and education; with poverty and environment. It deals with casualties of war and violence; with resources for development. It deals with the role of the family; with the role of women; with the special situation of the girl child.

But this time, this text is more than just words. It represents a commitment to take action: a commitment for each of us, in our nations, but also together in joint efforts.

To this commitment we will be held accountable—and rightly so.

Reporters will soon ask us: What did you do? Our voters will eventually ask the same. And our children will eagerly put the same question.

Judging from the discussions today, at the World Summit for Children, I am sure that we will be able to answer these questions, both in substance and in words.

And therefore it is an honour for me to propose that the participants in this Summit adopt the draft World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children.

Prime Minister Mulroney: I thank Prime Minister Carlsson, who has proposed the adoption of this momentous Declaration and Plan of Action for the 1990s and beyond. I will now call upon six young people to read the draft Declaration before this assembly. Each child will read a passage of the Declaration in one of the six official languages of the United Nations. I call on our young readers.

The World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children was read aloud by six children, in their respective languages.

(French)

"*World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children*

"1. *We have gathered at the World Summit for Children to undertake a joint commitment and to make an urgent universal appeal—to give every child a better future.*

"2. *The children of the world are innocent, vulnerable and dependent. They are also curious, active and full of hope. Their time should be one of joy and peace, of playing, learning and growing. Their future should be shaped in harmony and co-operation. Their lives should mature, as they broaden their perspectives and gain new experiences.*

"3. *But for many children, the reality of childhood is altogether different.*

"The challenge

"4. *Each day, countless children around the world are exposed to dangers that hamper their growth and development. They suffer immensely as casualties of war and violence; as victims of racial discrimination,* apartheid, *aggression, foreign occupation and annexation; as refugees and displaced children, forced to abandon their homes and their roots; as disabled; or as victims of neglect, cruelty and exploitation.*

"5. *Each day, millions of children suffer from the scourges of poverty and economic crisis—from hunger and homelessness, from epidemics and illiteracy, from degradation of the environment. They suffer from the grave effects of the problems of external indebtedness and also from the lack of sustained and sustainable growth in many developing countries, particularly the least developed ones.*

"6. *Each day, 40,000 children die from malnutrition and disease, including acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), from the lack of clean water and inadequate sanitation and from the effects of the drug problem.*

"7. *These are challenges that we, as political leaders, must meet.*

(Russian)

"The opportunity

"8. *Together, our nations have the means and knowledge to protect the lives and to diminish enormously the suffering of children, to promote the full development of their human potential and to make them aware of their needs, rights and opportunities. The Convention on the Rights of the Child provides a new opportunity to make respect for children's rights and welfare truly universal.*

"9. *Recent improvements in the international political climate can facilitate this task. Through international co-operation and solidarity it should now be possible to achieve concrete results in many fields—to revitalize economic growth and development, to protect the environment, to prevent the spread of fatal and crippling diseases and to achieve greater social and economic justice. The current moves towards disarmament also mean that significant resources could be released for purposes other than military ones. Improving the well-being of children must be a very high priority when these resources are reallocated.*

"The task

"10. *Enhancement of children's health and nutrition is a first duty, and also a task for which solutions are now within reach. The lives of tens of thousands of boys and girls can be saved every day, because the causes of their death are readily preventable. Child and infant mortality is unacceptably high in many parts of the world, but can be lowered dramatically with means that are already known and easily accessible.*

"11. *Further attention, care and support should be accorded to disabled children, as well as to other children in very difficult circumstances.*

(Spanish)

"12. *Strengthening the role of women in general and ensuring their equal rights will be to the advantage of the world's children. Girls must be given equal treatment and opportunities from the very beginning.*

"13. *At present, over 100 million children are without basic schooling, and two thirds of them are girls. The provision of basic education and literacy for all are among the most important contributions that can be made to the development of the world's children.*

"14. *Half a million mothers die each year from causes related to childbirth. Safe motherhood must be promoted in all possible ways. Emphasis must be placed on responsible planning of family size and on child spacing. The family, as a fundamental group and natural environment for the growth and well-being of children, should be given all necessary protection and assistance.*

"15. *All children must be given the chance to find their identity and realize their worth in a safe and supportive environment, through families and other care-givers committed to their welfare. They must be prepared for responsible life in a free society. They should, from their early years, be encouraged to participate in the cultural life of their societies.*

"16. *Economic conditions will continue to influence greatly the fate of children, especially in developing nations. For the sake of the future of all children, it is urgently necessary to ensure or reactivate sustained and sustainable economic growth and development in all countries and also to continue to give urgent attention to an early, broad and durable solution to the external debt problems facing developing debtor countries.*

"17. *These tasks require a continued and concerted effort by all nations, through national action and international co-operation.*

(Arabic)

"The commitment

"18. *The well-being of children requires political action at the highest level. We are determined to take that action.*

"19. *We ourselves hereby make a solemn commitment to give high priority to the rights of children, to their survival and to their protection and development. This will also ensure the well-being of all societies.*

"20. *We have agreed that we will act together, in international co-operation, as well as in our respective countries. We now commit ourselves to the following 10-point programme to protect the rights of children and to improve their lives:*

"(1) *We will work to promote the earliest possible ratification and implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Programmes to encourage information about children's rights should be launched world-wide, taking into account the distinct cultural and social values in different countries.*

"(2) *We will work for a solid effort of national and international action to enhance children's health, to promote prenatal care and to lower infant and child mortality in all countries and among all peoples. We will promote the provision of clean water in all communities for all their children, as well as universal access to sanitation.*

"(3) *We will work for optimal growth and development in childhood, through measures to eradicate hunger, malnutrition and famine, and thus to relieve millions of children of tragic sufferings in a world that has the means to feed all its citizens.*

"(4) *We will work to strengthen the role and status of women. We will promote responsible planning of family size, child spacing, breastfeeding and safe motherhood.*

(Chinese)

*(5) *We will work for respect for the role of the family in providing for children and will support the efforts of parents, other care-givers and communities to nurture and care for children, from the earliest stages of childhood through adolescence. We also recognize the special needs of children who are separated from their families.*

*(6) *We will work for programmes that reduce illiteracy and provide educational opportunities for all children, irrespective of their background and gender; that prepare children for productive employment and lifelong learning opportunities, i.e., through vocational training; and that enable children to grow to adulthood within a supportive and nurturing cultural and social context.*

*(7) *We will work to ameliorate the plight of millions of children who live under especially difficult circumstances—as victims of* apartheid *and foreign occupation; orphans and street children and children of migrant workers; the displaced children and victims of natural and man-made disasters; the disabled and the abused, the socially disadvantaged and the exploited. Refugee children must be helped to find new roots in life. We will work for special protection of the working child and for the abolition of illegal child labour. We will do our best to ensure that children are not drawn into becoming victims of the scourge of illicit drugs.*

*(8) *We will work carefully to protect children from the scourge of war and to take measures to prevent further armed conflicts, in order to give children everywhere a peaceful and secure future. We will promote the values of peace, understanding and dialogue in the education of children. The essential needs of children and families must be protected even in times of war and in violence-ridden areas. We ask that periods of tranquillity and special relief corridors be observed for the benefit of children, where war and violence are still taking place.*

(English)

*(9) *We will work for common measures for the protection of the environment, at all levels, so that all children can enjoy a safer and healthier future.*

*(10) *We will work for a global attack on poverty, which would have immediate benefits for children's welfare. The vulnerability and special needs of the children of the developing countries, and in particular the least developed ones, deserve priority. But growth and development need promotion in all States, through national action and international co-operation. That calls for transfers of appropriate additional resources to developing countries as well as improved terms of trade, further trade liberalization and measures for debt relief. It also implies*

structural adjustments that promote world economic growth, particularly in developing countries, while ensuring the well-being of the most vulnerable sectors of the population, in particular the children.

"The next steps

"21. *The World Summit for Children has presented us with a challenge to take action. We have agreed to take up that challenge.*

"22. *Among the partnerships we seek, we turn especially to children themselves. We appeal to them to participate in this effort.*

"23. *We also seek the support of the United Nations system, as well as other international and regional organizations, in the universal effort to promote the well-being of children. We ask for greater involvement on the part of* non-*governmental organizations in complementing national efforts and joint international action in this field.*

"24. *We have decided to adopt and implement a Plan of Action, as a framework for more specific national and international undertakings. We appeal to all our colleagues to endorse that Plan. We are prepared to make available the resources to meet these commitments, as part of the priorities of our national plans.*

"25. *We do this not only for the present generation, but for all generations to come. There can be no task nobler than giving every child a better future.*

"*New York, 30 September 1990.*"

Adoption and Signature

Prime Minister Mulroney: Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, children: First of all, may I ask you to join me in a special word of congratulations to a remarkable group of young people who have done a tremendous job this afternoon.

This is a happy, but solemn, occasion because the Declaration and the Plan of Action, which we are about to adopt, represent the promise of world leaders to succeeding generations.

It is our pledge to protect the future of this planet by ensuring the special well-being of all children by providing as best nations can for every child.

The draft Declaration and Plan of Action are the result of careful and extensive negotiations. They represent the consensus of Governments from all regions of the world, all cultural traditions, economic conditions, religious beliefs and political systems.

May I take it that it is the solemn wish of all the Heads of State or Government participating in this World Summit to adopt by acclamation the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children and the Plan of Action for Implementing the Declaration in the 1990s?

It was so decided.

Prime Minister Mulroney: It is fitting that we have invited young people to witness the historic signing of the Declaration and then to take symbolic custody of this document. The realization of their full potential and that of their peers for decades to come will be the ultimate testament to the success of the efforts we undertake today.

I now invite President Traoré to join me in signing the Declaration in testament to its adoption by the Heads of State or Government here assembled.

President Traoré and Prime Minister Mulroney jointly signed separate copies of the Declaration on the podium.

Prime Minister Mulroney: Before there is a final word, on your behalf I want to express a special word of thanks to Mayor Dinkins of New York City and to the City of New York and all the members of the various policing institutions—from the police of the City of New York to the secret service—all of whom have looked after us so well. I want to offer them special thanks.

I also want to pay a special tribute to an individual who has come to represent the very best of what the United Nations is and has become. He was here during its greatest challenges from the beginning and then, over the period of years, at moments, in my judgement, of its greatest accomplishments. I refer to an individual who is again with us today and without whose support this day would not have been possible: the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

And so we have come, colleagues, to the end of this Summit, an important step on the road to better lives, we all hope, for the children of the world. We have issued a Declaration, and we have endorsed a Plan of Action. A better world for children is within our reach, but as many of the Heads of Government pointed out today, it is not yet within our grasp.

It is too early to say whether or not this Summit has indeed been a success. Its success will be measured in two, in five, or in ten years—in terms of whether our nations, individually or collectively, attain the aims they have set for themselves. It will depend on the number of deaths we prevent, the number of lives we improve, and the extent to which children's right to life is respected and their interests are protected.

Our efforts are directed towards the best of all possible causes: the future of our children. It is time, as many of you have said, to match our words with action. The real work starts now.

I declare this Summit over. God bless you all.

REPORT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PRESENTATION TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE DECLARATION AND PLAN OF ACTION ADOPTED BY WORLD LEADERS AT THE WORLD SUMMIT FOR CHILDREN

Report by the Prime Minister of CANADA, His Excellency The Rt. Hon. Brian Mulroney,

Co-President of the World Summit for Children

On behalf of my Co-President, President Traoré of Mali, I have the honour to submit a report on our deliberations this weekend.

No one suffers more from poverty than children. And never has that suffering been more evident to the people of the world. Everyday, 365 days a year, 40,000 children around the world die entirely preventable deaths. Millions more go hungry or are denied education or are abused.

Seventy-one world leaders came to New York this weekend to do something about the suffering these numbers represent. Yesterday's gathering of world leaders shed greater light on some of the world's darkest secrets: child hunger, poverty, homelessness, disease, exploitation and illiteracy. We saw the faces of joy as well as the tears of pain in the video produced for the Summit.

We discussed issues never before on a Summit agenda—childhood diseases, family planning, the responsibility of parents towards children.

No one who came to this Summit is satisfied with the status quo. We all agreed that the problems confronting the world's children must be addressed urgently. The question is not simply that of poverty; many are neglected in affluent modern societies as well. We also found that the healthy development of children involves a number of aspects—economic, medical and technological.

On a subject that lends itself so easily to generalizations, the goal of the Summit was to catalyze practical action by Governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and families—who will always have the major responsibility to provide a loving environment for the children of the world. The objective was to move the issue of children higher up on the policy agendas of all participating countries.

At the Conference, 71 world leaders, including leaders who will follow me to the rostrum—the President of Mexico, the President of the United States and others—endorsed a common Declaration and an important Plan of Action.

In the Declaration, they pledged to obey ten main principles covering all of the areas from immunization to clean water, touching upon planned parenthood and the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Words don't fix problems, especially problems as pervasive and persistent as child poverty. But around the world in the past two years, voices lifted in hope and determination have summoned individuals in the millions to acts of courage and determination that have inspired us all.

With the cold war over and the United Nations functioning in magnificent style, as its architects envisioned it would, with Germany uniting and the Soviet Union undergoing profound reforms, it is clear that humanity is capable of profound change and new directions. The lesson is that our past does not have to dictate our destiny, that new futures are possible if we set our minds to the task.

The endorsement of the Declaration and the Plan of Action this weekend was an indispensable step to bringing all Governments to act. It would be premature to say the Summit was a success. The true success of the Summit will be discernible only in the years ahead, as nations implement their commitments and invest strategically in their most valuable resource, their children.

I have already been in contact with the heads of the major multilateral financial institutions, and their response has been most encouraging. Already, the work of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank and other, regional banks is shifting to complement the efforts of national Governments.

The World Bank's intention to increase its lending for primary health care to 5 per cent of its total lending will mean half a billion dollars a year for primary education and basic health measures. This increase should make a most important contribution in improving the lives of children, particularly children in developing countries, who so urgently and desperately need the help not only of lending agencies but of every person in the Assembly today. By bringing the leaders of the world to a common determination to take up this challenge, the Summit, largely a creation of Jim Grant and his excellent staff at the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), has given the issue of children some important impetus. And now political will must keep the ball rolling.

It is my privilege to join with my Co-President, President Traoré, in presenting the Conference Declaration to the President of the General Assembly. On behalf of the 71 world leaders who have signed them, we sincerely commend these documents to all of you, to all countries, to the United Nations and to its constituent agencies and to communities everywhere.

May I once again express the gratitude of all members, and that of the 71 leaders who participated, to the Secretary-General and his remarkable staff for their contribution, to Jim Grant and all the people of UNICEF for having made it such a marvellous success. My thanks to all of you.

Statement by the President of the UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, His Excellency Mr. Guido de Marco (MALTA)

It will give me great pleasure to accept the Declaration and the Plan of Action adopted by world leaders at the World Summit for Children.

It is for me a source of deep satisfaction that my term as President of the General Assembly coincides with the holding of the World Summit for Children. The gathering this weekend of 71 Heads of State and Government to apply their wisdom, vision and political commitment to goals and strategies for the survival, protection and development of children throughout the world is a unique occasion. It signifies the determination to act in concert on behalf of the millions of suffering children, not only out of a feeling of compassion but as an expression of political will and regard for improving the human condition of children.

In assessment of the Organization's achievements, the adoption by the General Assembly on 20 November 1989 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which came into force on 2 September, is generally recognized as a landmark event which embodies a comprehensive list of goals for the well-being of children.

I am convinced that the adoption of the Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children, along with a very specific Plan of Action, by the participants in the World Summit for Children will accelerate the ratification and implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

I should like to extend my warm congratulations to the six initiating Governments of the World Summit which, with the support of UNICEF, organized the Summit. I also wish to pay tribute to our Secretary-General, who provided the good offices of the United Nations in support of this historic initiative.

The well-being of children was the theme of the Summit. Let us seek to harmonize and renew our efforts so that we may hand on to the "succeeding generations", to which our Charter appropriately refers, a world in which starvation, disease, poverty and privation are memories of the past and not the inheritance of the future.

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